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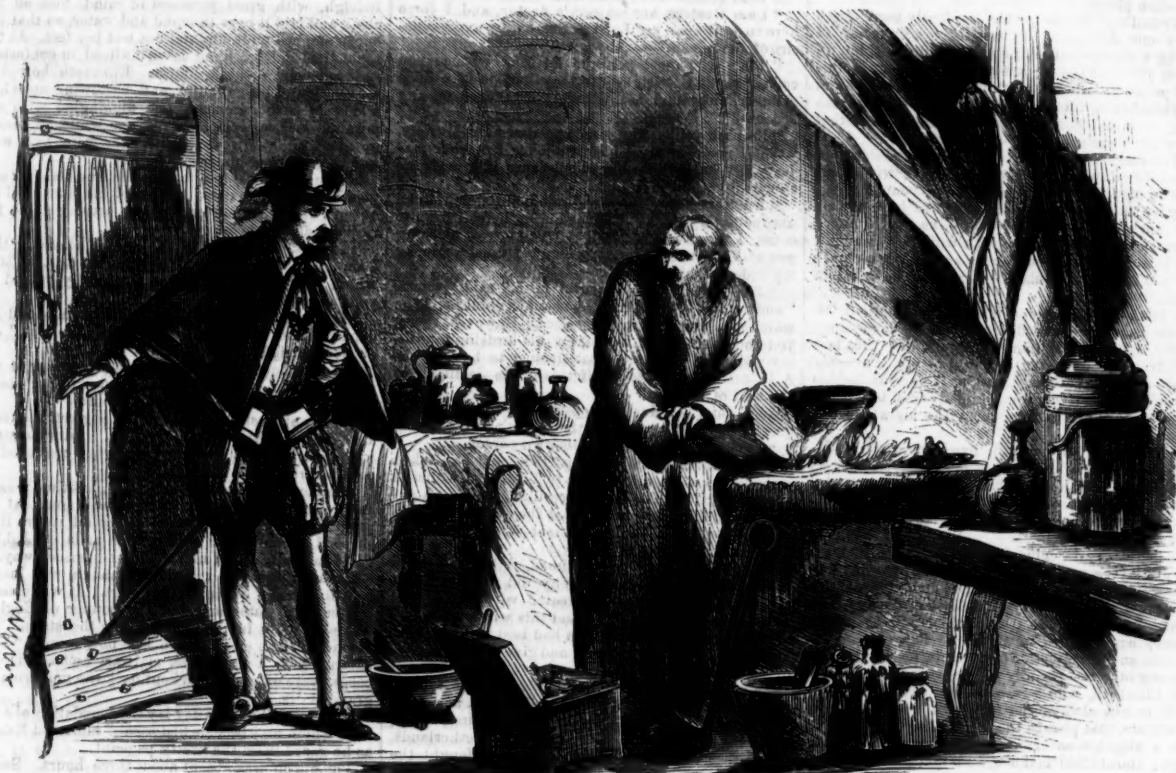
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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[ALCAZAR SUMMONED BY VARNET.]

AMY ROBSART.

BY BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG.

Author of "Heart's Content," "Evander," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VII.

The good old rule
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
That they must take who have the power,
And they must keep who can. Wordsworth.

At the close of the last chapter we left Raleigh and Tresillian making their way to the place in which the disturbance originated; they found on their arrival that all was comparatively quiet, though Jack Barfoot was held in close custody by three stout men.

"What is all this?" asked Tresillian. "Cannot you carry yourself decently in a nobleman's household, especially when you know that his lordship is ill, and the least noise may aggravate his disorder?"

"I pray you hear me, sir," answered Jack, "and tell these knaves not to hold me so tightly by the collar; I have not breathing room. I was in the kitchen, for I have a hankering after the buttery when I am hungry, and do not mind doing turnspit duty; who should I see in close confab with the cook but my old master, Alcazar. In his hand he held a powder which he dropped into a stew-pan—I told you he was skilful in poison. Well, I seized the paper with a spring—it is in my hand now, though but little of its contents remains. I would have held him too, and let your worship examine him, had I not been prevented by those grooms. I declare solemnly my conviction that there is foul play. I demand to be allowed to examine the powder, and to be advised of his lordship's symptoms, for if the case is as I suspect, I can cure him."

Tresillian and Raleigh glanced from one to the other, and the former said:

"There may be more in this than appears on the surface. You have full permission to act as you please. Stop this Alcazar, and let us see what his connection with the cooks is. You are your own master in the matter."

Barfoot no sooner found himself free than he made inquiries after Alcazar, but he was gone, no one knew whither. He proposed that the cook who had been in conversation with him should be interrogated, and the savoury dish he was preparing examined.

The news spread through the household, and it was generally considered that an intrigue of a deadly nature had been timously interrupted.

For the nonce, Jack Barfoot was the hero of the hour, and there was that in his manner which favourably impressed those with whom he came in contact. He did not demean himself as an impostor; he was firmly convinced that he was right, and when he insinuated that the Earl of Sussex was being slowly poisoned men's minds were in such a suspicious state that all were ready enough to believe him.

Say's Court, at Deptford, was not the property of the Earl of Sussex, as may have been imagined. It had for centuries belonged to a family of that name, but owing to the changes of fortune sustained by one of its members, it had come into the market and was purchased by a courtly gentleman named Evelyn, who was a devoted friend of Sussex, and, knowing his wish to be near the queen's palace, he had lent it to him for a time, and from its large space and ample accommodation it was more fitted for the earl and his numerous retinue.

For some long while such a din had not been heard in its secluded corridors as was raised by Jack Barfoot in his encounter with the person he had termed Alcazar.

Tresillian had so much confidence in his follower that he paid the utmost attention to what he said, and, proceeding at once to the kitchen, had the chief cook examined, with the following result. The chef admitted that he had lately made the acquaintance of a herbalist, who was the man seen by Barfoot. He knew him not by the name of Alcazar, but by that of Camillus, and believed him to be well versed in astrology, as he had predicted that by the use of certain herbs, which he would give him to introduce into the earl's cookery, he should presently rise to high favour with his lordship. He had used the herbs,

and, he flattered himself, with some slight success, as he had received no complaints from any quarter.

"His lordship is surely poisoned," said Jack Barfoot, eagerly. "I will stake my life on it that my old master Alcazar, who has the craft of the fiend, is employed by some hostile faction to do the earl an injury. Give me, thou rascal cook, what thou mayst have left of this fiend's trash, which the false Camillus hath given thee, and a murrain on thee for thy credulity."

With some reluctance the cook handed him a small packet of dry, crisp leaves, which Barfoot turned critically over in his hand, feeling, tasting, and raising them to his nose.

"It is as I thought," he said, at length. "This is a slow poison, and lest you are in league with this Camillus, as you call him, to kill our noble master, I will advise that you be put under arrest."

"It shall be done," cried Tresillian, beckoning to a man-at-arms, who stood curiously by. "Take this fellow," he added, "and hold him safe under lock and key till further orders."

The cook, loudly protesting his innocence and vowing vengeance upon his accuser, was led away to be confined in an out-house in the yard, where he could kick his heels with the rats for company, and feel the want of his tasting bits, the lack of which was ill supplied with black bread and indifferent water.

"Fortunately," continued Barfoot, "I have with me a sovereign remedy for this noxious mixture—for its very rareness I carry it with me at all times. It is the famous orvietan, or Venice treacle, and I warrant me in a dozen hours the earl will be better than he has felt for a month past."

"I will endeavour to induce his lordship to take your remedy," said Tresillian; "for if it do no good, I apprehend it will do no harm. You allege that it is an antidote to the poison which, through the folly or treachery of your cook, he has been taking into his system. Await my return here, and compound thy remedy during my absence."

Tresillian hastened to the earl's chamber, and was admitted, as his noble kinsman had just awoke from

a brief and unrefreshing slumber. In the meantime, Barfoot ordered the scullions to do his bidding, calling them "Jack Scullion," knave, dishwasher, clouts, and other elegant names, which increased their respect for him and the alacrity with which they obeyed his commands.

Raleigh and Marsham, who had followed the crowd to the kitchen, were vastly amazed at the scene, and the former, with his usual light, sparkling, and witty manner, made a fire of running comments on what had taken place.

"Tresillian," he said, "has evidently been raised up as our deliverer. I was thinking myself of making a voyage to the Indies and relinquishing all idea of rising at Court; but since the advent of this Jack-pudding, who is to throw all the leeches of recognised fame into the shade, I shall e'en burnish up my hose and don my best cloak, in the hope that I may catch the eye of our royal mistress."

"You catch her grace's eye!" said Marsham, an old soldier who had fought in Ireland, with some scorn in his tone; "what is there in your physiognomy which should cause the queen to look at you, jackanapes that thou art? Thy vanity is more sickening than the essence with which youoint your person. Why, your face is as long as a child's kite, and nothing calculated to please the mind of woman."

In truth Raleigh had a remarkable countenance. His forehead was exceedingly high, his face long; Aubrey, indeed, calls him sour-eyed. He had one advantage over the gallants of his time—his beard turned up naturally, and, as it was the fashion to wear it so, his rivals were obliged to call in a touch of the barber's art to give them the air which was then most admired.

Nevertheless, he was tall, handsome, and bold. In after-life, when his fortunes advanced, he became very proud. Sir Robert Harley, of Brampton, declared it was a question whether he or Sir Thomas Overbury was the most overbearing man of his time.

He had a great genius for extravagance in dress and display—a portrait of the period represents him dressed in a white-satin doublet, all embroidered with rich pearls, and a mighty rich chain of great pearls all round his neck, the pearls being half as big as pigeon's eggs; added to which, he had a genius for intrigue, and knew better how to flatter his patrons than any other. Especially did he become a favourite with Elizabeth, who advanced him greatly.

"It is not always the face, you weather-busten son of Mars, that pleases the ladies," replied Raleigh, with a slight tone of annoyance. "The honeyed tongue, the studied manner, and the well-paid compliment go farther. I will wager that my wit goes a greater way than the handsomest face among the gallants of the Court, at least, with Elizabeth, who likes reading, and even that poetry which is growing fashionable, and which you decri as an art of no importance. Her majesty is familiar with the old authors. She reads Spenser, and admires wild Will Shakespeare's sonnets and plays. Her tutor, Ascham, did not let her waste her time the while she was at Hatfield."

They retired to the ante-chamber, where they were in attendance, should their master, the Earl of Sussex, want them, his gentlemen taking it in turns to guard him. Say's Court, in truth, was like a castle in a state of siege, the followers of the earl believing that they had everything to dread from the Earl of Leicester, who was jealous of his rival's favour with the queen. They said openly that Leicester dealt with sorcerers and wise men, and that his belief in the stars was great. They knew him to be as unscrupulous as he was ambitious, and surrounded with men who were desperate and devoted to his service. So when the story of Camillus, or Alcazar, and the cook got wind he was at once put down as an emissary of Leicester, who, they readily believed, had employed him to poison Sussex.

Jack Barfoot was not long in compounding his antidote, which he took to the bed-chamber of the earl, who, at Tresillian's instigation, swallowed the potion, which threw him into a deep perspiration, followed by a profound sleep. Barfoot then ordered that on no pretence should his lordship be disturbed until the morning, as his cure depended upon the quiet which he might enjoy. All in the house, receiving their cue from Tresillian, were as mute as mice, and when night came no sound of revelry was heard in the vast mansion.

Tresillian occupied himself in drawing up a petition to the queen respecting the abduction of Amy Robart, daughter of Sir Hugh, of Lidcote, alleging Varney to be the villain who had usurped her affections, and setting out his own melancholy share in the business.

This he forwarded the same evening by a special messenger to the queen, at her palace at Greenwich, and was content, having prayed for justice, and feel-

ing sure that Elizabeth would thoroughly investigate so serious a charge against a prominent follower of the Earl of Leicester—whose honour—he being her favourite, she would not wish to see tarnished by any one in his train.

It fell to the lot of Walter Raleigh to see the sentinels posted as usual on the walls in front of the moat, and towards the hour of midnight a traveller arrived at the drawbridge, demanding admittance in the queen's name.

"Who goes there?" demanded Raleigh.

"I am Masters, her majesty's doctor, and I come here to wait upon my Lord of Sussex, by express desire of the queen," was the answer.

"Then you must perforce go back whence you came," replied Raleigh, "for my lord is in a deep slumber, and must not be rudely awakened on any account."

"Bethink you, young sir," exclaimed Dr. Masters, "that I come at great inconvenience from her majesty. What will be her displeasure if I am thus churlishly repulsed?"

"I neither know nor care," rejoined Raleigh, in an unconciliatory tone. "If the queen herself were to come, I would not admit her. To-morrow morning you may enter freely. At present, I must abide by my orders, which are precise."

"This is strange treatment, I' faith," said Masters, "and savours of treason. Why should a nobleman keep watch and ward in time of peace? However, I wish you good e'en, and I would, for his lordship's sake, my visit had been more satisfactory to both of us. A Leicester for me, say I, if this is the treatment of the Earl of Sussex."

With this, Dr. Masters departed on his horse in a great taking, feeling that the queen's majesty had been grievously insulted in his own person.

In the morning Raleigh reported what had taken place between him and Masters to Tresillian, whom he desired to inform the earl. Tresillian was much annoyed, thinking very justly that the queen would be enraged, and that her resentment would act to his kinsman's prejudice.

"Here is a coil," he exclaimed, "that you have thoughtlessly got us into! Why did you not admit the doctor, and have him treated with ceremony? We shall all be in disgrace, and this will work to the advantage of Leicester. You had best make up your mind to retire to the country, and give up all thoughts of success at Court."

"Not I," replied Raleigh. "What I have done is nothing serious, and I had the earl's health and well-being at heart. If her majesty should be displeased, there are still wars in Ireland and the Netherlands, and thither will I betake myself. I have fought the Irish kerns, and can fight them again. The blame—if there is blame—is mine. If I have his lordship's sanction, I will go to the queen with an apology and explanation."

"Go! Heaven's name, and lose no time about it. Who knows what this wild prank of yours may cost us?" answered Tresillian.

"First of all, I pray you, is his lordship better?" asked Raleigh.

"Very much so," replied Tresillian. "The medicine he took last night has worked wonders in his state."

"Who shall say after this that there is no safety in conjurers?" observed Raleigh. "Your knight of the antidote has shown himself a worthy physician, and deserves a right royal gerdoun."

"Which he shall have, rest assured. But, for the sake of Heaven, and as you love us all, hasten to straighten this coil, and make things pleasant with the queen. Leicester is exasperated at Court, and if her majesty is angered with us, who knows what disastrous consequences may ensue to us, and what happy results flow to him? Our parties are nearly evenly balanced now, and I would not have him take any undue advantage arising from our foolishness."

"Trust me," said Raleigh, confidently. "If the sea is troubled, I know how to steer the barque through the storm: neither Scylla nor Charybdis frightens me."

And having donned his best cloak, he sallied forth with a jaunty air, and, taking boat, went down the river with a favourable tide to Greenwich.

CHAPTER VIII.

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.
Julius Cæsar.

WHEN Raleigh arrived at Greenwich he saw the royal barge at the stairs, which denoted that her majesty intended to take her diversion upon the water. Accordingly he deemed it prudent not to intrude himself on her presence in what might be an inauspicious moment.

A number of spectators had congregated along the short line of route, who were kept back by the warders, and a line was made through which the queen with her train could pass.

Raleigh took his stand with the rest, and was allowed, perhaps owing to his rich attire, to be in the front row. He had not waited long before Elizabeth with her Court, and escorted by her gentlemen pensioners, made her appearance.

Just in front of Raleigh was a puddle, caused by the recent rain, and as her majesty approached it, Raleigh, with great presence of mind, took off his cloak and laid it over the mud and water, so that the queen stepped on it, and did not wet her feet. At the same time Raleigh hung down his head in confusion, as if ashamed of his boldness. Elizabeth bowed in recognition of his gallantry, and, bestowing upon him a look of encouragement, not unmingled with admiration and curiosity, passed on, while he picked up his cloak, all dripping with miry water as it was, and threw it over his arm.

The spectators began to disperse, and Raleigh was wondering how he could dispose of his time until the queen's return, when one of the attendants on her majesty approached him.

"I think, sir, knight of the cloak," he said, "that I am not mistaken in addressing you by that title, which is the one you have universally gained by your appropriate action just now."

"If you mean that I have somewhat damaged my apparel in her majesty's service, you are right," answered Raleigh.

"It is the queen's wish that you attend her at the palace on her return from London, whither she is going. See that you are not unmindful."

"It is not likely that I should be neglectful of such a requisition," Raleigh said, smiling. "Her majesty's wish is a command to me, even when conveyed by such a surly clown as you."

The messenger was about to reply, but time pressed and a glance towards the river showed him that the royal barge would start ere he could return if he stopped to bandy words with "yon malapert lad," as he disdainfully called him while he hurried away.

Pushing down to the river, Raleigh was just in time to see the queen's barge start. It was manned by her own watermen, and the banner of England waved proudly in the breeze from the stern. The yeomen of the guard, who are now termed "beefeaters," then a handsome, stalwart and serviceable corps, were on guard and kept back the mob from the grand stairs.

"I think I shall this day lay the foundation of a fortune which may become historical," muttered Raleigh as he gazed upon the pretty pageant.

The queen was absent about three hours. Seeing her return, the young man hastened to the palace, and was in a short time admitted to the stately chamber where Elizabeth was making merry with the members of her Court. The Bishop of Lincoln and Lord Burleigh had come down from London on affairs of State, into which their royal mistress did not seem inclined to enter.

"May it please your majesty," said the usher of the black rod, "there is one without that awaits your grace's commands."

The queen signified her wish that he should come in, and Raleigh, with his modified cloak hanging on his arm, approached, making a low obeisance, though not seeming at all abashed at finding himself in such exalted company.

"Rise, sir," said Elizabeth, while the courtiers regarded the new comer curiously, some having an inclination to laugh, though they dared not give expression to their mirth until the cue was afforded them in high quarters. "We have to thank you for your gallantry this morning, and we trust that your wardrobe is sufficiently well stocked to make the spoiling of your cloak a matter of small moment to you."

"I am a poor follower of the Earl of Sussex, madame," answered Raleigh, "and we who have been in the wars have generally more scars than money; though were it the only cloak I possessed in the world I should esteem myself happy since it has been soiled in your majesty's service, and had the inestimable honour of being pressed by so beautiful a foot. It shall be sent to my father's house and placed among the most treasured of our heirlooms, and I have your grace's permission."

"Nay, young man, you can do what you like with your own, though it seems to us a silly fancy; still we are beholden to thee. The peacock looks not well with his feathers bedraggled, and you shall be provided for out of our privy purse."

"I crave your grace's pardon; I am no peacock," said Raleigh. "I merely follow the opinions of Will Shakespeare, whose wild wit adorns your majesty's reign."

"Well, what says he?" asked the queen, who was always ready for an encounter of wit.

"Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,"

answered Raleigh.

"Ah, 'tis aptly quoted. If we recollect rightly it is from the play of 'Hamlet,' a prince of Denmark; one Polonius says it," the queen answered, pleased that her reading was as extensive as the young gentleman's; "and in the same play we recall a line which runs thus:

"Though this be madness, yet there's method in 't."
And this applies to you. What say you, my Lord of Lincoln, was ever queen so served before?"

"Never in my recollection, your majesty. I have somewhat studied the manners of the most accomplished courtiers, but this action strikes me as standing by itself and being, as it were, unique," replied the bishop.

"What is your name?" continued the queen.

"Walter Raleigh; I am the cadet of a large but honourable family, and have fought in Ireland," Raleigh replied.

"Didst thou not say that you held service in the household of the Earl of Sussex?" Elizabeth exclaimed, with an angry flush. "The statement had escaped us; though that insolent noble shall not escape punishment for his conduct. What think you, my lords and ladies?—we sent our own Doctor Masters to Say's Court last night to attend upon this recalcitrant peer, and he was rudely refused admission. Can we bear such insults?"

"I was entrusted by the earl, madame, to come to Court this morning, and explain a circumstance which bears somewhat against him," answered Raleigh.

"It will bear no explanation; yet we will hear thee."

"A strange leech had taken my lord under his especial care, and, having administered to him a sleeping potion, gave strict orders that he should on no account be disturbed. It came to my turn to be on duty during the night, and when worthy Doctor Masters arrived I took upon myself the sole responsibility of refusing him admittance. If I have done wrong I did it in your majesty's service."

"How can that be, Sir Chop Logic?" inquired the queen, angrily.

"Because the Earl of Sussex is your majesty's loyal and devoted servant. If he had been disturbed it might have cost him his life, and you would have lost one of the most solid supports of your throne," answered Raleigh, with some ingenuity.

"The lad hath a knack of making the worse cause appear the better. Thou shouldst have been brought up in Westminster Hall among the lawyers," Elizabeth said, with a slight laugh. "But, for all that, we have just cause of severe displeasure against the Earl of Sussex. We hear that his house is garrisoned like a fort in a state of siege, and that his followers and those of the Earl of Leicester walk with their hands on their sword-hilts, ready to pick a quarrel on the slightest provocation. This must be ended. You will deliver our command to the earl to come to our palace at Greenwich to-morrow, if he be well enough, to meet the Earl of Leicester. There shall be a stop to these differences. Now, we pray you, has this strange leech of whom you speak bettered your master's health?"

"He awoke this morning much refreshed, after enjoying such sound sleep as he has not known for weeks past, madame."

"Come! we are glad of that. We must now give audience to my Lord of Burleigh, or we shall fall into sad disgrace with our trusty councillor. Let us see more of you, Master Raleigh, but look that you are more circumspect."

Raleigh bowed, and, reverently kissing the queen's hand, retired, envied by the courtiers, who saw that he had made a favourable impression on her majesty, and would very likely some day be a shining light among the choicest spirits of the day.

Hastily returning to Say's Court, he found Tresillian anxiously expecting him. The Earl of Sussex was also impatient for his arrival.

"How fares it, Walter?" inquired Tresillian, who, espying his dirty cloak, added: "What, have they trounced thee in the kennel?"

"All is well," answered Raleigh. "I have won the queen's favour, and her majesty desires his lordship at Court to-morrow to heal the breach 'twixt him and Leicester."

He related what had taken place, and Tresillian, much pleased, conducted him to the earl's presence, to whom he repeated what he had gone through.

"Twas well done, Raleigh," said the Earl of Sussex; "we will attend the Court to-morrow, my health being restored, and, if needs must, we'll patch up a peace with this gipsy." This was a contemptuous term he applied to Leicester on account of his dark, almost swarthy complexion. "The queen's humour seems favourable to me, but her

mood changes like the wind. Think you, Tresillian, that the petition you spoke to me about just now has reached her majesty—I mean that respecting Varney and Sir Hugh Bobsart's daughter?"

"Blount, to whom I entrusted its delivery, assures me that it was given into Elizabeth's own hands," Tresillian replied.

"I am glad of it, for I shall push it home to-morrow. So grave a charge against the earl's favourite will tell against Leicester, or I am hugely mistaken."

"'Tis a monstrous injustice," Tresillian said; "though the subject is so painful to me I would fain not dwell upon it."

"Clearly," the earl answered, kindly. "Still, revenge will be sweet. If I can put this swaggering Leicester out of countenance, 'twill do much to place me high in Elizabeth's favour, though I know not how to woo her good will as he does. I faith, I am not suited to dangle in the boudoir of a palace, or dally in a lady's chamber. My features are hard and stern, I bend not, and when I smile I force my nature. This is not suited to a Court like that of Elizabeth, and there the fellow hath the advantage of me. He can sigh, pay compliments, flatter Queen Bess's vanity, and Heaven knows she's more than her fair share of that commodity; lying and flattering will always win a woman's heart, I've heard say."

"The queen will do justice, and I pray Heaven this Varney may fall into disgrace."

"She shall do justice, and the miscreant hound shall be treated as he deserves. We will have Mistress Amy back in her father's hall before the month's out!" Sussex exclaimed, vehemently. "Leicester shall not lord it over me as he has done. Why, we are but pigmies beside him. He would possess the earth and the people thereof, as I think the Scripture has it; but pride like his must have a fall. Raleigh," he added, changing quickly from one subject to another, "you must not neglect the chance fortune has put in your way to-day. You may yet be a bright, particular star in the Court firmament, though I fear me the gipsy will be too much for you when I am gone."

"I trust your lordship will live many years to grace us," Raleigh answered. "As for myself, I carry a brave heart. While there is a sea to sail on and ships to sail in, and undiscovered countries, as I fancy, in spite of all Columbus has done, I can see a wide field for enterprise. Think of Drake, Hawkins, Fro-bisher."

"Well, well," said the earl, "the present must engross our thoughts now, though thy spirit likes me well. See to it, Tresillian—see to it, Raleigh, that our followers are gallily attired for to-morrow, and caution them on no pretence to quarrel. I would not give Leicester a pretext to complain of me." With this the earl turned towards his chamber; but, recollecting himself, he added: "Let your esquire, Barfoot, come to me. I must reward him for his service. Under Heaven, I believe he has saved my life. Send him up at once, Tresillian."

Barfoot gladly obeyed the summons, and received the earl's thanks for his timely treatment, as well as a purse of gold and a valuable ring set with a single diamond of price, with which he went away much contented, judging rightly that his present position could be favourably contrasted with his lot when Tresillian met him dancing a bear in the streets of Woodstock.

CHAPTER IX.

Oh, many a shaft at random sent
Finds mark the archer little meant!
And many a word at random spoken
May soothe or wound a heart that's broken.

A ROYAL mandate was sent to London, requesting the Earl of Leicester's presence at Greenwich on the following day, and directly it was received the earl despatched Varney to hang about the Court and pick up what news he could.

Varney returned in the evening with a full budget, and the earl received him in his private cabinet.

"I have taken such commodious lodgings as I could get, my lord," exclaimed Varney, "and our gentlemen must shift for themselves in the same way."

"That is a mere matter of detail, which might have been left to my groom of the chambers. What of the queen? What of Sussex?" answered the earl, impatiently.

"The talk is that Sussex is to meet your lordship to-morrow, for the queen has determined that you shall be friends, whether you will or not."

"Ha! is it so? 'Twill but be the hollow patching-up of a peace between us. What else?"

"The Earl of Sussex did grievously offend her majesty, owing to one of his followers sending her own doctor away from Say's Court. The earl was tended by a strange leech, who, report says, has cured him. The gentleman who repulsed Doctor Masters went to Court to make excuses, and won the queen's heart by spreading his cloak over a puddle for her to tread upon—one Raleigh by name."

"We must hold him in check," said the earl, quickly. "I am minded to arrange a great coup. The queen has for some time promised me that she will visit my castle of Kenilworth in state. I will urge it upon her now, and the arrangements shall be so gorgeous and diverting, and the round of festivities so endless, that we will for ever eclipse Sussex. A plague upon his recovery! I thought you told me this Alcazar never failed? He has been now six weeks in our employ and drawing our pay."

Varney rose and carefully shut the door, which stood ajar, as if fearful that any listener might overhear what was passing.

"I pray you, my good lord," he said, "speak under your breath of this Alcazar. It was with difficulty that I traced him out and induced him to enter your service, and had it not been for a misadventure his plan would have not miscarried."

"How is that?" asked the earl, interested.

"I saw him but a couple of hours ago at Greenwich. He had made acquaintance with the cook who had the command of the kitchen in the household of the Earl of Sussex, introduced himself as a herbalist, by name Camillus, a perfect master of similes, and he won the silly scullion's heart by predicting him a good fortune."

"Yet can he read the stars?" cried the earl, suspiciously.

"Ay, can he! With Dr. Dee, or any one of them who know the Cabala," Varney hastened to reply. "Well, as I was saying, Alcazar so ordered the cookery of the earl that he fell ill, and would have died had not Tresillian brought to Say's Court a fellow who was formerly our wise man's assistant, and he, by ordering an antidote and unmasking Alcazar, who escaped at the risk of his life, being there at the time, has undone all we plotted for."

"Tresillian again," said the Earl of Leicester, with lowering brow. "I have a presentiment that this man will work me some great evil yet, Varney."

"Not he, my lord," Varney replied, with a disdainful laugh. "We have but to be true to ourselves. I fear him not."

It seemed that Leicester had an intuitive feeling of coming evil, for he was reserved and even sullen for the remainder of the time his master of the horse remained with him.

Thoughts of Amy and his secret marriage filled his brain, and he dreaded lest by any mischance his indiscretion of the heart should become known to so jealous a mistress as Elizabeth.

At this time the Earl of Leicester was inconsistent itself. When with Amy he felt that his love for her was great enough to swamp all ambitious considerations, and he had an inclination to declare his marriage and renounce Court favour for ever.

This he might have done had it not been for the counselling of Varney.

When at Court he became ambitious again, and his ideas of Arcadian felicity disgusted him. His ambition returned with a full tidal rush, and he had an idea of becoming the leading statesman in England.

On the morrow the rival earls presented themselves at Court about the hour of mid-day. They came with full retinues, Sussex by water, Leicester by land, and met in the courtyard of the palace. A quarrel having existed for some time between them, they did not exchange greeting.

The Earl of Sussex was the first to be admitted, and he was passed in with one attendant only, that being Tresillian. Such were the queen's orders. Raleigh obtained admittance easily, as by her majesty's favour he was to have audience on all state occasions.

Leicester faced no better. The Black Rod would only allow Varney to accompany him, and thus they entered the presence of the queen, who was surrounded by a brilliant circle of statesmen and beautiful ladies, richly attired.

"Ha, my Lord of Leicester!" exclaimed Elizabeth, "we are glad to see you again, after your enforced absence in the country. We hear you have made a right royal progress, as befitting my deputy, and the good people of Woodstock are delighted with our messenger."

"Your grace is too good," replied Leicester, flushing with pleasure. "I always do my best endeavour in your majesty's behoof."

"We know it," Elizabeth returned, "and yet we are going to chide thee. Nay, start not. You have done good service, and we acknowledge it, but we think that you and others of our subjects imagine that because a woman reigns over this fair land of England there shall no more be order and due respect paid to the throne."

"Surely, your grace is under a misapprehension," said the Earl of Leicester.

"Not a whit. Here are you and my Lord Sussex broiling together as if we had returned to the days of feudalism. Why, your factions threaten us with a civil war; but we promise you that you shall taste

of the Tower fare if peace be not made between you!"

"I assure your grace," Sussex hastened to say, "that I have no intention of disturbing the peace of the realm. Nevertheless, it is hard to bear with unmerited annoyance."

"We make no distinction between you," replied the queen, haughtily. "If it has pleased us to bring you near our royal person, we can undo our work, and severe measures must be taken unless you at once heal your differences. It is for you to choose, my lords."

There was a brief pause.

Sussex, being a sturdy old soldier, and considering himself aggrieved by the attitude that Leicester and his followers had taken up against him, could not bring his proud heart to make the first advances, though he well saw the danger with which he was menaced if he incurred the queen's displeasure.

Leicester, being more of a courtier, and knowing that a reconciliation must ensue, determined to do violence to his feelings, and ensure his royal mistress's regard by being magnanimous.

He advanced a few paces, and, holding out his hand, exclaimed:

"There is my hand, Sussex."

"And I give you mine," replied the earl, a little bashfully. "Take it, Leicester, as 'tis meant."

There might have been a hidden meaning in these words, though the queen saw it not. She was visibly pleased at the newly struck friendship, and said:

"We hope we shall find this peace a lasting one, or by our father's memory we will make you both rue it!"

And while she spoke the blood of Henry the Eighth seemed to mount to her face and inspire her with a commanding presence seldom found in a woman.

The courtiers watched this remarkable scene in silence, and waited the *dénouement* with some impatience.

"You have a gentleman in your household, my lord," continued the queen, addressing Leicester, "named Varney."

"I have, your majesty," the earl said, turning pale.

"Now, now," cried Raleigh, plucking Tresillian by the sleeve, "now you will see how the petition works."

"Peace, I pray thee," said Tresillian, who was deeply agitated.

"Let him stand forward. We would have speech of him," the queen continued.

Varney, with the utmost promptitude, stepped into the front rank of courtiers, and advanced to her majesty with a modest demeanour which was becoming under the circumstances.

"We are informed," said Elizabeth, "that you have been guilty of what in our eyes is a great crime, Master Varney. There is a certain lady, the daughter of Sir Hugh Robsart, of Lidcote Hall in Devonshire, who has been induced to leave her home against her father's wish, and men say that you are the cause."

"I cannot deny that I love the lady," answered Varney.

Leicester was by this avowal placed in a most trying position. Having embarked upon a career of duplicity, he did not dare to avow the whole truth. In fact, he could do nothing but stand still and look on. Yet it was gall to him to hear his attendant, Varney, speak of Amy as if she belonged to him. He became pale, he changed colour, he trembled, and never before had he felt such a commotion in his veins.

He was minded to step forward and acknowledge everything, throwing himself on the mercy of his royal mistress, but that impulse he restrained, as if indulged in it would be probably the wreck and ruin of his fortunes. Situated as he was then, he could not declare his marriage with Amy Robsart, much as he loved her, much as he knew that she was a true, devoted, and faithful wife to him.

"If the silly girl loved you," said the queen, "and you loved her, why did you not go to her father and demand her in marriage, like an honourable man?"

"Simply because I knew I should be unsuccessful," replied Varney. "Sir Hugh Robsart had set his mind on a very different match, and I cannot blame him either. He had selected for his daughter's husband a true and honest gentleman, whom I see here to-day, by name Tresillian. He must hate me for robbing him of his love, but all is fair in love and war, so I've heard say, madame. Mistress Amy Robsart preferred another to Master Tresillian, and she ran away."

"Your assurance is so great," said Elizabeth, frowning, "that we fear this is not your first essay in so infamous a pastime. Tell us, is this lady truly your wife?"

Having taken the whole blame of the affair upon himself, it would have been folly for Varney to hesitate, and he replied:

"She is."

"This is too much," cried the Earl of Leicester,

coming forward; "I cannot bear such infamy. His wife! May the thunderbolts of Heaven fall upon thee!"

"Leave him to us, my lord," said Elizabeth, with a complacent smile. "Now, sir, answer us truly; we will get at the truth. Were you aided and abetted by your master in seducing the affections of Mistress Robsart?"

"My Lord of Leicester was too much occupied by other affairs to interest himself in my business, madame," answered Varney.

"Then he knew naught of it?"

"No more than a sleeping man knows of what takes place during his slumber."

"We are glad to think that you, my lord, are exonerated from this grave scandal," the queen went on. "After all, it seems to us that the girl is nothing more than a jilt. She exercised the privilege of her sex and changed her mind."

"I pray your majesty for further investigation," said Tresillian, stepping forward.

"To what end, sir?"

"I will not believe Master Varney until his word is corroborated by that of the lady herself."

"My lord," said the queen to Leicester, "will you vouch for your attendant?"

"I have ever found him trustworthy and devoted," answered the earl, sick at heart.

"We have long purposed to visit you, my lord, at your castle of Kenilworth," said Elizabeth.

"I wish nothing better," replied the earl.

"In ten days' time we will honour you with our presence, and you, Master Varney, look to it that you produce your wife. From her lips we will have the whole truth. If you have done wrong, rest assured that the countenance of your master shall not save you from our resentment."

The Earl of Leicester and Varney bowed simultaneously.

"If the Earl of Sussex will condescend so far as to honour me with his presence during your majesty's gracious sojourn I shall be more than pleased," said Leicester, who saw his way to making a favourable impression. "I cannot pretend to rival the attractions of Say's Court, but my poor abode shall give him a hearty welcome."

"I—I pray you excuse me," replied Sussex.

"No, that he shall not," cried the queen. "You want relaxation after your late illness, my lord. We shall expect you to meet us there. Varney, forget not what I have commanded. We see to thy wife, and hold conversation with her. See to it that she be at Kenilworth."

Soon afterwards the audience was over, and the peers in attendance waited upon the queen in privy council, where matters of importance were to be debated.

Leicester was in a strange mood. Away from Amy his ambition asserted itself, and he was content to forget her, hoping that some fortunate circumstance would arise to enable him to escape from the toils in which he had entangled himself.

He held himself bravely, putting unpleasant thoughts on one side and aiding the council by his strong common sense and his political genius.

When he could escape from the Court he sought Varney, with whom he was anxious to take counsel. He found him awaiting his arrival.

"I trust your lordship," said Varney, quickly, "will pardon me for the attitude I assumed to-day. I acted for the best, though what passed was as painful for you as it was for me."

"I see nothing but ruin, and destruction before us, if Amy appear before Elizabeth," answered the earl, much perplexed. "I have been received with great favour all day, and my prospects are brighter than ever they were. It were a pity that all this fair edifice should be destroyed by one breath of an ill-wind."

"It shall not be so if your lordship will be guided by me," said Varney.

"What would you do?"

"Mistress Robsart—"

"Nay, there you are wrong," she is, by all law and right, my countess, Varney," interrupted the earl.

"Pardon me, my lord. I fear the walls may hear my speech, and I am over cautious. The countess must not come to Kenilworth."

"But how to prevent it?"

"I will have it so arranged that doctors' certificates shall say she is too ill to attend. You must leave it to me, my lord. She shall not come to Kenilworth."

Varney spoke with emphasis, but Leicester did not seem convinced.

"I am all of a maze in this," he said, doubtfully; "would that I had never accompanied you to your Devonshire home, Varney, then I should not have seen this syren."

"All may be yet repaired, my lord," answered Varney.

"Find me Alcazar and send him hither," the earl exclaimed, suddenly. "I will ask him what my fate

may be. You say he is well versed in astrologic lore?"

"He has made the stars his study during his life, and if knowledge is to be gained by devotion to science and mortification of the flesh, he should have it," rejoined Varney as he quitted the earl's presence.

Varney walked through the streets of Greenwich until he came to a small house, overlooking the park, in which the astrologer had lodgings.

He was at once admitted, and found the sage in his laboratory, which he had extemporised, with a stove, some phials, and retorts, in a spare room in the house.

"You must come with me," said Varney; "his lordship has need of your quackeries. Mind that you humour him to the top of his bent. He is not well pleased with the failure of your plot. You should have rid Say's Court of its inmate by this time."

The man he addressed was a thin, shrivelled, under-sized person, with an elongated face and a long, white beard, clad in a fantastic gabardine, fastened at the waist with a piece of cord after the fashion of a Capuchin monk.

"Was it my fault?" replied Alcazar. "Could I tell that my rascally assistant, whom I supposed dead, should come from the grave, as it were, to thwart me?"

"No matter. Speed thou to the earl, and tell him that he shall some day be king of England. Tell him, also, that his present perplexities shall have a happy issue," Varney said.

"What may be the nature of his present perplexities?" asked Alcazar, with a cunning leer.

"That is his business and mine; I will not trust thee with secrets of importance. We know one another, Master Diviner. Do that which you are paid for, and seek to know nothing further. Art ready?"

With a look of deep malignity, the astrologer threw a long cloak over his shoulder and replied in the affirmative.

They left the house together, and proceeded towards the temporary residence of the Earl of Leicester.

(To be continued.)

JONES'S ISLAND.—There has arrived at San Francisco a cargo of over 11,500 seal skins, taken at Jones's Island, in the Sea of Okhotsk, between latitudes 52 and 53 deg., and longitudes 145 and 146. This island is half a mile in circumference, is uninhabited, and is a remarkable rendezvous for seals. The question whether Jones's Island belongs to the United States, and whether duty shall be imposed on seal skins taken there, has been referred for decision to the Secretary of the United States' Treasury.

EXTRAORDINARY CATCHES OF HERRINGS.—The largest and most extraordinary catches of herrings ever known were brought into Lowestoft market on Saturday October 22nd. They consisted of 15,000 lasts, or 19,000,000—nearly 20,000,000 herrings. The price realised was 1s. per 100, being between 7,500l. and 8,000l. The scene in the market beggars description.

It is a noteworthy sign of the times that the Chancellor of each of our two Universities has offered to pay the costs of building a laboratory, to be used for experiments in physical science. In this fact the advocates of a larger infusion of science into the curriculum at Oxford and Cambridge will find a recognition of their opinions; and we congratulate those two ancient seats of learning on this handsome addition to their appliances for teaching. It will be their own fault if they do not take the lead in physical science as in classics and mathematics.

A DEFECT IN THE BANKRUPTCY LAW.—An unexpected defect in the Bankruptcy Law appears to have been discovered. A correspondent of the *Times* states that one of the Registrars of the London Bankruptcy Court has decided "that upon payment of a debt into court within the period limited by the summons, the proceedings are satisfied, and the creditor it not entitled to costs." This decision, as is very correctly pointed out, will certainly diminish somewhat the utility of a trader-debtor summons, which is the only effective substitute in the Act for the old penalty of imprisonment for debt. Creditors who know they will not get their costs will be tempted to resort to some other mode of procedure, so that many bankruptcies will not occur so soon as they ought; and creditors who prefer losing their costs in their anxiety not to lose more will have to pay a fine which there is no motive for inflicting. So far as it operates the regulation will favour the debtor and injure the creditor. We may hope that some good ground will be found for reversing the judgment on appeal, so that the roundabout process of a legislative amendment of the law may not be needed. The costs ought certainly, in all strictness, to be considered a part of the debt; but it is quite possible the point may have been overlooked, as the framers of the Act might only have in view the natural completion of the proceedings in bankruptcy.



[FLAVIUS CONFRONTED BY PEREDEUS.]

FAIR RHETA, THE LOMBARD FLOWER GIRL.

CHAPTER VII.

Perdition catch my soul
But I do love thee, and when I love thee not
Chaos is come again. *Othello.*

FLAVIUS had surely never seen a face that was a perfect poem until this moment when he stood bewildered beneath the spell of that of Rheta, the favourite flower girl of Pavia. Eyes that were a dream of tenderness, a mouth whose pouting lips were ripe fruit, a throat, curling like Psyche's, a complexion that a child might have envied, and a low, broad forehead, crowned with delicious waves of golden hair; all these, with the evidence in her more serious voice and manner that she was not a pretty picture merely, but a gentle, timid maiden, with a pure heart and cultivated mind, made Rheta a most charming woman.

Flavius read all this in the flower girl's face, as almost unconsciously he replied to her flippant words, addressed not to him particularly, but to any who might be within hearing, as a part of her duties.

"Buy a bouquet so sweet that it will win you the heart of the most fickle fair one," the maiden repeated as her eyes and hands were intent on re-arranging some of her stores.

"I would willingly purchase all your store of flowers, maiden fair, and lay them at your feet, if they would win me their mistress's heart," was the armourer's gallant reply.

"You would soon tire of it and throw it from you, like the poor flowers," was the maiden's quick retort as she raised her eyes to the speaker's face.

Whether it was that she saw more truth, honour and sincerity in his face than in others who complimented her, or that she was familiar with his looks, she started and blushed deeply on encountering his gaze.

"Pardon me for addressing you thus, sir," she stammered out. "I imagined you were one of the class who usually come to buy my flowers."

At this moment she espied Gianetta, and with a cry of delight she reached over the stand of her booth, and, catching the little maiden in her arms, covered her face with kisses.

When Gianetta had also manifested her delight in meeting her friend, she remarked, in her naive manner:

"This is my good brother Flavius, dear Rheta. I have already told both of you all about each other,

and now if you will only love each other, you cannot devise anything to make me happier."

A ruddy blush overspread both the young people's faces, which suddenly gave place to a look of painful terror on Rheta's part, as an angry woman's shrill voice cried:

"Who speaks of love—the spell born in the infernal pit to lure innocent souls to destruction? Who dare mention love to my child, and how dare she listen to it?"

Ere Flavius could ask for an explanation of this strange language, the speaker dashed into the booth and for a moment glared fiercely on him. In that moment the young armourer saw the most cruel and malignant face that it had ever been his lot to behold on woman. At one time its features might have been regular, and even handsome, but age and unbridled passion had seamed and contorted them into the semblance of a Medusa, with tattered garments and unkempt hair falling about her face.

"Ha!" she exclaimed, vindictively, with flashing eyes, and brandished a stick in her hand threateningly. "Flavius, our good armourer, would win my daughter, ha, ha! But old Flayda can read his thoughts and balk him in his plans, too. Flayda's daughter is betrothed to one higher than an armourer."

Then, turning upon the trembling flower girl, she cried:

"Oh, you lazy hussy, this is the way you squander your time, talking to evil-minded people, instead of selling your flowers and helping me to earn bread and clothing for you. You are a selfish, thankless daughter, and I have a mind to beat you within an inch of your life."

The poor girl cowered beneath the uplifted stick, but ere it could descend Flavius sprang forward and caught the angry woman's uplifted arm.

"Dare to wreak your anger on that helpless creature, and I will hurl you to the ground and take her under my protection," he cried. "What claim to the maiden's obedience dare you put forth?"

"Your impudence exceeds your perception," suddenly replied Flayda as she read the determination of the young man, and lowered the stick. "See you not she is my daughter?"

"Your daughter! Impossible!" uttered both Flavius and Gianetta as they cast an incredulous look upon the maiden.

"Rheta, have I not said the truth?" appealed Flayda to her, exultingly.

The poor girl had concealed her face in her hands, weeping bitterly, but she nodded her head in the affirmative to the old woman's question.

"There is mystery here," thought Flavius. "The

poor child may believe that this woman is her natural mother, but the old woman lies. She has the maiden utterly in her power, however, and I fear her purposes towards her are not honest."

He threw some pieces of coin on the stand, saying:

"Here is money to pay you for any imaginary loss you may have suffered in the maiden's attention to us."

Flayda grasped the coin greedily, and with the possession of it her demeanour towards both Flavius and the flower girl changed.

"There," she said to Rheta, "you are wasting precious time by weeping. Take some of your prettiest flowers to the group you see yonder. They will buy from you, though they scoffed at your mother; and, mind you, make them pay well for their folly."

The girl moved away with laggard steps, casting one stolen glance at Flavius and Gianetta, but dropped her eyes in confusion as she saw with what evident admiration the young armourer was gazing upon her. Flayda did not notice this, but turned her conversation quite graciously to him.

"Ah," she said, "Rheta is not so bad a child after all, and it is almost a pity to contend against the gods in their purpose to give her a crown."

"A crown of these sweet flowers; such a one as she has wreathed here with her own pretty hands?" smilingly questioned the young man.

"You are trifling with my words," Flayda said, scowling. "I said a crown, and I mean none other than that worn by the crazy queen Rosamond."

"Explain your meaning, woman!" Flavius gasped as he caught her violently by the arm.

"The oracle of the gods has written it that Rheta shall be the next queen of Pavia, but the oracle speaks falsely if it means that she shall not be the bride of another before she is queen to King Alboin!"

"King Alboin! Why do you mention his name?"

"Because he would give half his kingdom to possess Rheta as his queen to-day."

"How know you this?"

"By his daily visits to her booth, in a disguise that is not cunning enough to deceive old Flayda; by the costly presents he would lavish upon her, and by the overtures made to me by himself direct."

"But, woman, Queen Rosamond is still his queen, and he cannot wed another."

"Ha, ha, ha!" maliciously laughed Flayda, "think you a king considers such a trifle as a wedded wife when he sets his passion upon another? Besides, our good King Alboin is more of a fool than his past conduct would prove him if he could not find a way to get rid of his present burdensome queen."

"Heavens! how blind I have been," thought Flavius as he pressed his hands to his temples. "That which this woman has revealed to me explains that effort against the life of Queen Rosamond. The executioner and his ruffians were only the obedient tools of Alboin, king of Pavia."

Then, turning to Flayda, he cried, almost choking with fear and indignation:

"Woman! you did not dare to barter this pure maiden away to the royal villain? She did not pollute her ears by hearkening to his shameful suit? Oh, tell me at once, I pray you."

"The girl shrink from him since she first was obliged to listen to his flatteries. She was foolish enough, even, to refuse to touch his costly gifts, but I, having no silly compunctions like that, accepted them for her and kept them, too—ha, ha! But I tell you, man, rather than have her the mistress or queen of Alboin, or the wife of any but the one I have chosen for her, I would see her dead! Look on me—see my pinched, haggard, hideous face that my enemies say must look like the Evil One's! Once it was fair and beautiful as Rheta's, but since that time I have planned, and worked, and starved for the consummation of one single purpose in life until it has made me what I am. Know you the patrician Peredus?"

"He is honoured by all true friends of Pavia."

"Ha, you speak well; and to Peredus only shall Rheta be wed. I vowed it when she was first brought into the world; I have sworn it every day since, and, spite of gods and oracle, spite of King Alboin, too, it will be as I have said it must be. Peredus loves the girl, and he will have her!"

Flayda looked more fiendish than ever as she exultingly uttered these words, and rubbed her hands together in her glee.

"You are mad, woman!" exclaimed Flavius, in horror; "Peredus is old enough to be the maiden's father, and it would be sacrilege to unite her to him. It must not—it cannot be!"

"I tell you it shall be, though all the earth were leagued against it," shouted Flayda, trembling with rage. "I have been foolish to reveal so much to you; but I warn you, on the peril of your life, do not endeavour to cross my purposes, nor pry further into them. Peredus shall possess the girl. Not until he has her within his embrace will my life-purpose be secured, then I care not if the next day she die a dog's death in the streets! ha, ha, ha, ha!"

Her fearful words and her laugh, so fiendish in its malignity, curdled Flavius's blood; but he would have questioned Flayda further, had not Gianetta in her terror drawn him away from the place. On their way home both these young people were strongly moved to pity and indignation at the fearful fate awaiting the lovely flower girl. Flavius made poor progress with his work that day, for his thoughts were not upon fashioning and tempering metals, but upon how he might best serve this unfortunate maiden.

CHAPTER VIII.

A stern resolve was stamped on every face
As onward pressed each one unto the goal,
By devious tracks converging to one place
As tributary streams to rivers roll. *Anon.*

FLAVIUS still lingered over the sword he was fabricating, but with troubled face, for his thoughts were still upon the eventful occurrences we have narrated. The more he speculated over these occurrences the more impressive became a yearning that he now felt to look again upon the strange priest with the muffled face. He could not rid himself of the belief that this mysterious person was more than he seemed—that he was not a simple priest of the temple; but was even more than the mysterious oracle of the gods whose voice still uprose in prophetic power from the ruins of the vast temple of Ticinum. The young armourer felt, too, a singular trust in this unknown stranger, and some inward Mentor seemed to influence him to seek him out, reveal to him all his troubles and fears, and ask his counsel.

He realised that in the part he had acted in saving Queen Rosamond from the ruffians who would have murdered her he had defeated the terrible purpose of King Alboin himself to get rid of his lawfully wedded consort that he might claim the beautiful flower girl, and that he had thus gained the enmity of the king. It was not fear for himself, however, but a desire to protect both the queen and the flower girl that occasioned his wish to seek counsel from the strange priest.

But whither should he direct his footsteps in search of him? He did not know by what name he was called, nor where he found a home. He remembered now that the lonely man had said that he was a stranger in Pavia; he remembered, too, how mysterious his movements were, how careful he was to avoid scrutiny. Would it not be a hopeless task to search for him?

While thus undetermined as to what course to pur-

sue, a stranger in the garb of a servant entered and accosted the young armourer.

"Will you give me your name and calling, sir?" he asked.

"I am known as Flavius, the armourer," the young man replied.

"I have a message for Flavius, the armourer, but I am instructed by my master to use caution in delivering this message that it may reach the right person. There are some matters known only to Flavius and my master that occurred last evening in the palace grounds. Can you tell me aught of them?"

For a moment Flavius hesitated before answering this man, but he thought no harm could come to himself or to the strange priest by speaking of his conflict with the ruffians in the palace grounds, so he hastily related the main particulars of it, mentioning the appearance of the strange priest and his conduct.

"What said this veiled priest in explanation of the feeling he manifested over the maniac queen?" further questioned the man.

"Ha! I remember the words he used," exclaimed Flavius. "He said: 'None of her subjects have as much reason to love her as have I.'"

"Good!" exclaimed the stranger. "Know you now that I come to you at the bidding of this veiled priest whom you saw, to say to you that if you desire to meet him again you must appear before the residence of Peredus, the patrician, and the friend of Pavia, when the time marks midnight."

The stranger had scarcely uttered these words when he hastened from the workshop. Flavius called after him, as he desired to question him further, but it was without avail, and he was left alone to ponder over the message he had received.

Why had this message been brought and delivered in such a mysterious way? Might there not be deception about it to conceal some treachery meditated upon him? Thus thought Flavius, and for a time he determined not to venture forth. But as the midnight hour approached the fearlessness of his nature asserted itself, and, arming himself with his trusty blade, he stole forth without alarming Gianetta, who had previously retired to rest, and hastened towards the residence of Peredus, the wealthy and powerful patrician.

On his way thither, through the shadowy streets, deserted by the populace that usually followed their ways to and from their homes at earlier hours, he noticed with surprise a number of dark, silent figures of men creeping stealthily along in the shadow of the walls. Not like assassins or robbers did they go, following each other, but each figure seemed to take an independent course, occasionally crouching low to listen to the beat of the night sentinels, and changing their course to avoid them. From every direction these solitary figures came and went, crossing each other's paths without word or sign that he could perceive, and those who came near him passing as if they were not aware of his presence.

"Tis a party of revellers who have carried their feasting beyond the hour permitted for gatherings of friends by our suspicious king, and who are now skulking home to avoid arrest," muttered the young armourer as he continued on his way.

As he approached his destination he was surprised to see that the tide of silent, mysterious humanity was setting all in one direction, and that was towards the grounds surrounding the residence of Peredus. No longer the muffled steps crossed each other's paths, but they flowed on now together. And there were hundreds of them, and every figure was armed!

"Ha!" thought Flavius, in wild suspicion, "is treason abroad in Pavia? Can Alboin be ignorant of all this? Oh cruel monarch, methinks you would tremble on your throne did you behold this sight!"

He hastened his steps until he found himself at the entrance to the residence of Peredus, just as the great gong in the watch-tower sounded the hour of midnight. Ere he could ascend the steps the form of a man, with gray beard and hair, sharply cut features, and keen, gray eyes appeared, bearing a lantern in one hand and a sharp blade in the other.

The young armourer at once recognised in this person Peredus himself, and he gave his own name and calling.

"Ha!" exclaimed Peredus in a tone of relief. "I have been expecting you. Saw you anything worthy of note as you came along?"

Flavius told him of the strange figures he had seen gliding along silently and stealthily in such numbers, their evident destination being his grounds. He told this with a tone of anxiety, for he did not know but some attack by these mysterious armed figures was meditated upon his host. But the news seemed to occasion Peredus delight instead of fear.

"Hundreds of them, you say?" he exclaimed. "The good heaven is working, and I am rejoiced at it. Soon the army of Heaven will break down the battlements of tyranny, and the mighty power that lurks within the crust of the earth, under the temples

erected to the spirit of oppression, under the throne of the usurping monarch even, will rend its way upward, through, and over them, and inaugurate a new reign of love and mercy!"

Flavius listened with bewilderment to these excited exclamations of his host as he followed him into the house. They were a mystery to him, as everything seemed to be during this night. When he was led into a room that had the appearance of being used for a study, Peredus turned and again questioned him:

"Tell me, Master Flavius, what led you to seek me to-night?" he said, with an air of caution.

The young armourer thereupon told him of the visit of the strange man to his workshop, and repeated all that had passed between them relative to the veiled priest's request that he should proceed to the residence of Peredus at midnight.

"Did you not learn the purpose for which you have been called here?" further questioned Peredus.

"Beyond meeting this mysterious messenger from the priest, I am in utter ignorance of any purpose," returned Flavius.

"Yet I cannot be mistaken; my instructions were received from himself, and I dare not ignore them," Peredus muttered uneasily in an undertone. "Flavius!" he exclaimed, with anxious entreaty, as he grasped the armourer's arm violently, "what know you of this veiled priest? Who is he?"

"His history is unknown to me; all relating to him is deepest mystery."

"Yet, in your conflict with the king's hired ruffians, he pursued your life by the display of a power that we have believed dwelt with the gods alone?"

"It is true!"

"And in speaking of you to others he manifests a wondrous love and devotion towards you. Did you not notice when with him some trait of character, some unguarded look or word of his, by which we may find some clue to his identity?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Think; do not be hasty. Did you not catch a glimpse of his features, or can you not recall some unguarded action of his that you can explain to me? I would give all I possess to look into this strange priest's life a single moment!"

Flavius started. He remembered that the strange priest had torn the covering from his face when he knelt over Queen Rosamond, and he remembered, too, how he had pressed the queen to his heart and showered kisses on her lips, and he thought of his words of explanation for manifesting this emotion. These things, if told to Peredus, might furnish him with the clue he desired, yet he hesitated to reveal them to the eager patrician. Flavius remembered the parting injunction to secrecy from the strange priest, and there was something, too, in the face of Peredus that did not bespeak an honest purpose in his inquiry. It was this that governed the armourer in his evasive reply.

"I cannot help you in unravelling the mystery."

"Strange, strange," muttered Peredus in disappointment. "He is unknown to every one, yet he came among us with such evidence of his influence and power that he becomes the high priest over our brotherhood, and every knee trembles before him. In his presence all the ambitious purposes for which I have planned and toiled until their consummation seemed secured have become void, and I, who was first in the brotherhood, am now forgotten. Curses on the fate that cheats me thus! But I dare not rebel against his power."

The stern patrician had forgotten the presence of the armourer in the intensity of his thoughts, and the young man, while listening to words that were filled with mystery to him, studied the face of the speaker. Peredus was esteemed by the citizens of Pavia as among the most honourable of her noblemen, and Flavius, too, had thought him most worthy; but he now beheld such marks of selfishness, of cunning and of ambition lurking in his features that he began to fear him.

"Come," the patrician said, rousing himself from his painful reverie, "I will lead you to where the veiled priest will be awaiting our arrival."

CHAPTER IX.

A jewel in a ten times barred-up chest
Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast. *Richard II.*

THE young armourer followed Peredus, the patrician, as he led the way with lantern in hand through many devious passages and down several flights of stairs, until he knew that he must be a good distance below the surface of the ground. His guide stopped for a moment in a narrow cell-like apartment, the massive masonry of whose walls, covered with mould and slime, revealed no opening but that by which they had entered. Peredus hesitated a moment before the farther wall, then carefully measuring against the wall a certain number of spans with the palms of his hands, first from the right-hand corner in a direction to-

wards the left, then from the floor of the cell upwards, he suddenly threw his strength against the rough block of masonry, at the point where these measurements met. Slowly the block swung outward, revealing a dark passage-way beyond.

Peredens passed through this opening, and Flavius followed him, filled with astonishment, but remaining silent. The stone was swung back into its place, concealing the dark passageway, which they traversed until it terminated against a solid wall of masonry, through which an opening was found in a similar manner.

When Flavius had followed his guide through this opening he found himself traversing spacious chambers hewn out of solid rock. On either side of his course he beheld similar chambers, while paths crossed and recrossed each other in labyrinthian mazes that confused and perplexed him; but his guide continued confidently to lead the way through the intricate passages.

Many of the chambers were filled on either side with mummy-like objects, leaving only a narrow passage-way through them. Flavius shuddered as he saw by the glare of the lantern that these objects really were bodies of the dead, embalmed and wrapped in swathing linen, piled up one above the other in numbers too great for calculation.

At last the young armourer knew that he was treading the labyrinth of the vast burial chambers that lay beneath Pavia, which had been sealed up centuries before, and whose existence was known to but few except from tradition.

Occasionally as they proceeded they passed places where the walls of dead bodies, crumbling to dust with the lapse of time, had fallen over the passage-way, leaving scarcely room enough for them to force their way over the remains reduced to powder and dry as tinder. A cold terror seized the armourer as he thought of the result if a spark from the lantern should fall among the combustible mummies. He breathed more freely when they came to a stand before another wall of masonry, in front of which paced the spectre-like figure of a man, clad in deepest black, with a skull and cross-bones emblazoned on his breast.

"What seekest thou among the bones of the dead?" this spectral figure uttered in sepulchral tones as he raised his pike before them in threatening attitude.

"Most faithful keeper of mysteries, we seek the living skull of our murdered monarch Cunimund," replied Peredens, bowing humbly.

"Thy mission is a worthy one. Seek thou among the embodied spirits within," added the watchman as he stepped aside, and, seemingly without human agency, a portion of the wall of masonry swung outward, making a doorway through which the astonished armourer followed his guide, when it closed again.

The scene that now met the vision of Flavius called up an exclamation of wonder to his lips. He was in a massive rock-hewn temple from whose arched roof far above him, that was supported by columned pillars, was suspended brilliant chandeliers that lighted up the vast amphitheatre beneath. At one end of the chamber was a raised dais, surmounted by a throne, also cut from the solid rock, and covered by a draping of sombre erape, while in front of the throne and dais the rock had been fashioned into tier after tier of seats each raised above the other. These seats were now filled with a dense gathering of stern, determined men, whose bosoms were swelling with some mighty purpose.

On the dais before the craped throne were gathered many nobles of Pavia, and Flavius perceived as he recognised them that none were there only such as had been friends of the murdered monarch Cunimund, and friends of Pavia since in opposition to the usurpations and cruelties of King Alboin. Ah, the clouds now began to break and roll away from the mind of the armourer! He understood now what the army of silent forms fitting through the deserted streets of Pavia at the midnight hour was destined for! He now saw the signification of those hitherto mysterious words that had fallen from the lips of Peredens:

"The mighty power that lurks within the crust of the earth, under the temples erected to the spirit of oppression, under the throne of the usurping monarch even, will rend its way upwards, through, and over them, and inaugurate a new reign of love and mercy!"

Among those gathered on the dais before the draped throne, Flavius recognised the strange priest with veiled features, and as Peredens led the way to him he advanced, and, throwing his arms around the young man, he pressed his lips to his brow with deep emotion. The armourer was much moved at this reception, and in return felt all the tenderness of his heart go out towards this unknown priest.

"Flavius, armourer of Pavia," the veiled priest said as he stepped back, in tones that called the attention of every one, "all whom you see assembled here are brothers banded together to avenge them-

selves for foul wrongs heaped upon them in a slavery worse than death, and for the degradation of their mothers, wives and sisters, by the brutality and lust of a usurping monarch and the ruffians at his control. Each of us is bound by a solemn oath to work for the dawn of a new era of freedom and justice over Pavia, and to divulge nothing that may come to his knowledge relating to our purpose. Are you willing to join with us and labour in this holy work?"

"I am," replied the armourer, earnestly.

"Are there any here who will vouch for Flavius, armourer of Pavia?" questioned the priest of those assembled.

Scarcely had he uttered the words, when a shout went up seemingly from every throat in the vast temple. For all had heard how Flavius had defeated the mighty giant Helmichis, and preserved the life of Queen Rosamund. These determined men honoured bravery in another, and since his noble action had become known there was not a noble in all Pavia more esteemed and honoured than was the young armourer.

When the solemn obligations of the brotherhood were taken by Flavius, the veiled priest again addressed those assembled:

"Be patient a moment," he said, "and the living skull of the monarch Cunimund whom you mourn as murdered will appear before you to give you counsel!"

A hum of inquiry went through the temple as the speaker passed from view behind the throne. What could he mean by such words! All who were present knew that Cunimund's skull had been fashioned into a drinking-cup by King Alboin. In one way only could they possess it living; that way was in treasuring and keeping alive the noble lessons of love and justice that had emanated from the brain within it when it ruled Pavia. Was this the meaning of the veiled priest?

Ere the question could be answered, the sombre draping was thrown aside from the throne, and there appeared on it a figure that called a gasping cry of wonder and fear from almost every soul in the room.

"King Cunimund! Our murdered monarch!" were the gasping exclamations that echoed through the temple, for every one recognised in the face, blanched like death, that looked down from the throne upon them with such benignant sympathy and tenderness the beloved face of their long-mourned monarch Cunimund, and every knee was bowed before him.

Was it a spectre, an apparition only, or a living, breathing body of flesh and bones, every man asked himself. And while they asked the vision spoke:

"Noble sons of Pavia," it said, in tones that sounded as if coming from the grave. "I cannot rest in my deep seclusion under the knowledge of the great wrongs that are being heaped upon you and your loved ones. I have burst the fetters that bound me that I might meet with you in counsel. I must speedily return to my other form again, but henceforth I will meet frequently with you. Love ye one another. Call not upon the gods of the Romans, but seek aid from the one omnipotent, the eternal, the mighty Jehovah. In your purposes be firm and silent. Strike not until I name to you the auspicious hour, and in that hour I will be with you!"

The voice was hushed for a moment, as if to gain strength, but during that moment, when every other voice was hushed in awe, Peredens grasped the arm of Flavius and whispered, suspiciously:

"The veiled priest has disappeared!"

Flavius pointed to a figure standing near the vision of Cunimund on the throne, and Peredens recognised in this figure the veiled priest and turned away disappointed. He did not notice the gasp of wonder that escaped from Flavius as he also gazed on this veiled figure and then on the vision of Cunimund. If he had done so he might have looked again and discovered, as only the young armourer among all assembled did discover, that which would have made the veiled priest no longer unknown, and his history no longer one full of mystery. A wonderful light had come over the understanding of Flavius.

"My brethren," again spoke the vision of Cunimund, "your leader should be brave, fearless, and pure in life and purpose; one who shall weld together the different elements of which your brotherhood is formed into a perfect, irresistible, yet flexible chain of strength as a skillful armourer welds his metals; he should be one whose deeds have proved him to be worthy. Let Flavius, the armourer, be your leader!"

As if a thunderbolt had fallen upon him, Flavius heard these last words. He could not comprehend them until he heard the mighty shout of approbation well up from those in the temple, and saw the intense look of rage and mortification on the face of Peredens.

"This cannot, must not be!" shouted Peredens, in the excitement of his anger. "This man is only a plebeian; and the position should be mine. I will not submit to such an outrage."

"Who speaks of outrage in the presence of Cunimund?" exclaimed the vision. "Your words shame you, Peredens. Curb your ambition, and when any man of you has proved himself as worthy as this youth by brave, fearless acts, then shall he be declared the leader of the brotherhood. What say you, brethren?"

"Flavius shall be our leader!" was the powerful cry from every throat as Peredens fell back abashed, and ere the young armourer could utter a word of remonstrance he was led before the vision and blessed by it, after which it disappeared as mysteriously as it had appeared.

(To be continued.)

THE DIAMOND MERCHANT.

CHAPTER XVIII.

My soul was reckless in the crash
Of ringing shields and striking clash;
Then I had all the tiger's will,
And all the lion's strength to kill.

Eliza Cook.

It is now necessary to look after the fate of our diamond merchant, whom we left flying from the vicinity of the Riders' Court.

Wholly unacquainted with the winding and narrow path he followed—for it had been so long disused that it would have been invisible to any eye less skilled in wood-craft, Sir Edred spurred on with a bold and trusting heart.

At times the path became rocky, or choked up with fallen trees, or so steep that the merchant was forced to dismount and lead his horse over these vexatious obstacles. And there were times when he feared he should be obliged to abandon his steed and pursue his way on foot.

At length, after his flight had continued for hours he came suddenly upon an open space, large, but far less in area than the great enclosure called the Riders' Court.

The merchant was now at a loss which path to select, and began to ride round the edge of the space, seeking some opening to the eastward which might, from its character, be a continuation of the path he had so far successfully followed.

He had heard no signs to warn him that any of the Riders were near, and he was riding leisurely, gazing sharply at the various openings into the forest as he passed them, when three horsemen suddenly dashed towards him at full speed, shouting:

"Surrender, Sir Edred, surrender! and expect no harm."

"Edred Van De Veer never surrenders when he may fight or fly," thought the merchant as he wheeled his horse and spurred towards the centre of the enclosure. "They know me, and even if they do not intend to slay me as well as rob me, they will hold me a close prisoner until heavy ransom shall be paid. I must try to escape, that I may rescue my wife and son. There are but three of the knaves, and if I scatter them, my work may not be hard."

But these thoughts had scarcely flashed through his mind when he saw other horsemen charging towards him from various quarters.

"There are a score of them," thought Sir Edred as he glanced around. "I am surrounded! No—I may escape into the forest here on the left! If I gain the cover of the woods, I can abandon my horse and escape on foot, or hide for a time."

Wheeling again suddenly, at a moment when his enemies were certain there was no escape for him, he charged sword in hand upon two who attempted to bar his way. Master of his horse, and unequalled in the management of his weapon, Sir Edred hurled one of the two Riders from his saddle at a blow, parried the stroke of the other, and was off for the farther edge of the enclosure like a thunderbolt.

He would have reached the shelter of the forest but for a mischance that befell his horse. The feet of the animal suddenly sank deep into a marshy spot; he stumbled, sank again, was lifted by his rider, again stumbled and fell heavily on his side, carrying his rider down with him.

Sir Edred was on his feet in an instant; so was the horse, but, darting away from his late rider, and leaving the bridle broken in Sir Edred's hand, he galloped away at full speed towards the forest, into which he soon vanished.

The merchant, seeing that escape by flight was now impossible, prepared to die, fighting. He had heard fearful stories, and many of them he knew were true, of the cruelty of the Riders to their captives. He had seen unfortunate men who had been tortured and maimed by these greedy robbers—tortured that they might reveal where they had cunningly hidden their valuables, or be forced to accede to impoverishing terms of ransom.

He had heard, too, that these reckless ruffians never spared the life of those who had once escaped from them, or who had injured one of them, if

chance threw the offenders again into the power of the Riders.

The reader will remember that Baron Hermann alluded sharply to this ancient law of the Riders when expostulating with Sir Fritz.

The cries, therefore, of those who now spurred towards him, their shouts that no harm was intended against him, did not swerve the merchant from his desperate resolve to sell his life as dearly as he could.

"They'll spare my life, they say!" he muttered, smiling in bitter despair. "To make a chained slave of me for life, or till chance may free me, in their cursed stronghold they call 'The Rock!' No! a quick death, since it is my fate!"

The Riders, now twenty in number, were around him instantly, forming a circle of horsemen, of which he was the centre on foot.

"Throw down your sword, Sir Edred," said Sir Fritz. "Your life is not aimed at."

"Ha!" thought the merchant, "if that unlucky horse of mine had not carried off my ransom packet, I might make terms with these fellows. 'But no; I slew some of them five years ago, and three of them this very day.'"

"Throw down your sword, Sir Edred," repeated Sir Fritz, for it was he and his selected party. "Your life shall be spared. I am a knight like yourself, so deliver your sword to me."

"Who are you, Sir Thief?" demanded the diamond merchant, boldly.

The visor of Sir Fritz was up, and it could be seen that his dark face grew red suddenly, as he replied.

"I am Sir Fritz von Alden."

"More shame to you, then, since you were knighted by the emperor's own hand for good deeds, of which thieving was not one. Come, begin! I am better prepared to die than you are to live."

"Dismount," said Sir Fritz to his men. "Disarm and bind him, with as little hurt to him as possible."

The Riders were on their feet instantly, and with swords drawn advanced slowly towards the merchant. They had heard of his prowess, and knew that it was ever a perilous undertaking to disarm a desperate man without dealing him serious blows. Their aim was to draw their circle closer and closer, doubling their ranks as they closed upon him on every side.

They little knew the lion they had at bay.

Perceiving their tactics at a glance, Sir Edred smiled grimly, and charged furiously at those before him.

The struggle was not so unequal and overwhelming as the superior numbers of the Riders appeared to make it—nineteen swords to one. Under his outer garb the merchant, from head to heel, was sheathed in chain-armor of Milan steel. His cap was of steel too, and his visor down. He was, as has been said, a man who united the activity of the leopard with the strength of a lion. No swordsman in all Germany could rival his skill with the long, two-edged weapon he held. There was no trick of the Italian and French schools of fencing of which he was not a perfect master.

Moreover he was desperate. He fought with no hope to escape; but battled only to kill ere he should be killed.

On the other hand, the defensive armour of the Riders was defective and scant. Only Sir Fritz was excellently armed and armoured, and as yet he remained a spectator in his saddle.

Besides, the Riders had imperative orders not to slay the merchant, not to wound him seriously, not to wound him at all, if that were possible, in effecting his capture.

Thus in the first shock of the combat the advantage was much with the diamond merchant. In the twinkling of an eye he had cut down three men with his sword and desperately wounded two more with his dagger. He had fairly broken through the cordon of swords, and was bounding towards one of the many riderless horses, when Sir Fritz threw himself in his way. But for this act of the Rider chief the merchant might have escaped to the woods, so astounded were the dismounted forest-men by his prowess.

Sir Fritz was scarcely inferior to Sir Edred in strength and activity, nor was he at all inferior to him in courage. He was also clothed in excellent armour and mounted, and the merchant feared his time to die had come.

Sir Fritz, fearful of Sir Edred's escape, charged upon him, and succeeded in dealing a stroke upon his steel cap that threw the merchant upon his right knee. Before it could be followed with another, Sir Edred was up again, and gave a thrust that pierced the heart of the Rider's horse.

The horse reared with a cry of agony and fell backward, pinning Sir Fritz to the earth with his weight.

The other Riders were now swarming to the aid of their chief. Escape was again impossible for the merchant. He flew at Sir Fritz, who was strug-

gling to rise. He cut down man after man that sought to protect the life of the chief. Sir Fritz had just regained his feet when Sir Edred sprang towards him, with sword uplifted, and dealt a blow that would have been fatal but for the armour of the Rider. At that instant the merchant was struck down by a stroke from behind, and he fell upon his face.

He was pinioned and bound before he could rise, before he recovered from the stunning blow he had received. A minute examination of every part of his outer garments was then made, at the command of Sir Fritz.

The merchant smiled scornfully while this search for valuables was being made. A few coins of gold, silver, and copper were all that rewarded the eager fingers of the plunderers. The Riders had evidently expected to find jewels of great value secreted about the person of Sir Edred. Finding only a small sum of money, an amount scarcely worth sharing among so many, their curses and exclamations of disappointment filled the air.

Sir Fritz alone remained silent during the search, eagerly reading such papers as were found upon the merchant, and of all who were there Sir Fritz was the only one able to read, for learning was by no means general at that time. He seemed far more eager to read the papers of Sir Edred than his followers were to find concealed jewels, or at least as eager.

This eagerness did not escape the observation of Sir Edred, who kept his eyes upon Sir Fritz while the plunderers were busy in their vain search.

"Why does he thus sharply examine every scrap of writing?" thought Sir Edred. "Thank Heaven, there is nothing in my wife's letter to reveal the secret of the jewels."

"Strip him of his mail," said Sir Fritz as the maledictions of his men declared their rage and disappointment. "He may have his jewels concealed next to his skin."

"Good!" thought Sir Edred, as eager hands began to strip him of his coat of mail. "The jewels have not been found with Louise."

He made no resistance to the indignity to which he was subjected. In a few moments he was stripped to the skin. The Riders directed all their attention to renewed search of that which they had taken from him, but the eyes of Sir Fritz gazed keenly at a mark which was plain and clearly defined upon the naked breast of Sir Edred.

This mark was a birth-mark, the same in shape and colour as that of which Esther Wurmly had spoken to Ida Le Clair, and called "Baron Hermann's Seal."

But upon the breast of tall and athletic Sir Edred this mark was large, large as the hand of an infant, and shaped like the hand of a man.

"You were born with this mark?" asked Sir Fritz as he advanced a step and touched it with the point of his sword.

"I suppose so. At least, it has always been there from my earliest memory."

"We find nothing!" here roared the still disappointed plunderers, beginning to encircle the merchant with angry faces. "We expected to find at least a king's ransom, and have found only a few beggarly coins. He has put an end to several of our comrades, and sorely wounded many of us!" "Tie him to a tree and serve him as we did Anselm, the guide!" "Ay, for he has served us a viler trick than did Anselm!" "We let his wife go, but we must finish him!"

These and many other and more savage exclamations assailed Sir Edred's ears as the plunderers crowded round him, held back from instant assault upon him only by the presence of their cold-faced and dark-featured leader. It was very clear to Sir Edred that he had no mercy to expect from these furious and disappointed men, yet his stout heart throbbed with wild delight as he learned from their angry cries that his wife and son had been set free unharmed after their capture. He had faced death and torture too often in his adventurous life to be cowed by this present danger. A great weight was now lifted from his heart. He knew his wife and son and his diamonds had escaped the marauders, or rather been unharmed by them. The secreted jewels were still in the saddle, wherever that saddle might be. He might never see them nor his loved ones again, but his wife and brave Ernest were safe, and had immense wealth with them.

Sir Fritz, who had his own purposes in view, turned sternly upon his angry men and exclaimed: "Why kill him? Is he not Sir Edred Van De Veer, the diamond merchant? What will he be worth to us if we kill him? We will keep him for ransom. He can pay like a prince, like a king. Why, 'tis said he is richer than the emperor. You were furious yesterday because I permitted his wife and son to pass on. You wished me to keep them to be ransomed by him. I know we were soon to have him in our hands, and I let his wife pass on, for a wife will ever pay more for the ransom of her husband than a husband will pay for a wife. Re-

member the trader of Prague, whose wife we captured, and who returned answer to our demand for ransom: 'Keep her, my dear friends! I would have gladly given twice her demanded ransom to be rid of her tongue and temper.'"

"But you might have kept Sir Edred's wife and son, then we should have had all three," growled one of the plunderers.

"And had we all three, you fool, and not their wealth, who of those who have that wealth in keeping would be eager to set the merchant free to take his own again?" replied Sir Fritz, with a laugh. "Have you forgotten the family of the Volters?"

We captured husband, wife, and three children. We held them a whole year, and they would have been with us yet, or be dead, had we not at last set free the wife, that she might force the debtors of her husband to collect the ransom we demanded. Or the Ruburgs, whose eldest son we permitted to go, to collect ransom for his father and mother, and little brothers and sisters, but who, having collected the ransom, fled to some other kingdom with it, leaving his kindred to our mercy? Or the Afflerdams, whose children we held captive two years because their father and mother were miserly, and loved their gold more than they did their own flesh and blood? Now, had we all the family of this rich diamond merchant in our hands, who would be busy in collecting the immense sum we shall demand? His debtors? Bah! they would be glad to lengthen his captivity. His friends? His friends are his diamonds, and we want them. Trust all to me. There is no friend under the sun like a loving wife, and I know that Louise Van De Veer adores her husband. She will gladly give all his diamonds for him. If you expected to find a great store of hidden jewels upon the person of Sir Edred, you were short-sighted. He has fallen into the hands of men like ourselves a score of times, and no diamonds have ever been found upon him, or such as were found were false glass, paste, or Rhine flint-stones. Doubtless in the pocket of his saddle, with which his horse has run away, there is his 'ransom packet,' a contrivance that served him well once in Bohemia when I was of those who captured him."

"Ah, then you and I have met before-to-day!" said Sir Edred, regarding the marauder chief with more interest than ever.

"Three years ago, Sir Edred; but I wore a mask, and you saw not my face," replied Sir Fritz, carelessly, and as one who had little shame in his calling. "But resume your garments, and your mail too, if you desire, while I speak apart with my followers. Aldort, assist Sir Edred," he added, addressing his own esquire.

It was not long before Sir Edred was again in his armour and clothed as before, aided as he was by the nimble and expert fingers of Aldort, and while he was thus occupied Sir Fritz conversed apart with his men. They, after much colloquy, during which many dark looks were cast towards the merchant, especially as they saw him gazing calmly and unharmed towards them, proceeded to bury the dead where they had fallen.

The wounded had already been cared for, as far as possible. "They think less of vengeance than of ransom," thought Sir Edred, with a grim smile, which he took care not to make too visible. "But there are some of them who think of revenge too."

"A great work for one man to do, sir," remarked Aldort as he aided Sir Edred to put on his coat of mail.

"What, my friend?"

"I speak of what this arm has just done," replied the Rider, touching admiringly the tough and massive muscles of the merchant's sword arm. "And of the work it did yonder in the Riders' Court."

"Had I not been sheathed in steel from head to heel I would be a dead man now. But Heaven defends the right, my friend, and no man dies until his time comes," replied Sir Edred. "Were you of the party that captured Lady Van De Veer?"

"I was; but ask me no questions and I will tell you no lies," said the marauder, with a grin.

Sir Edred yearned to smite the fellow in the mouth for his insolence, but restraining his wrath, he threw himself upon the ground when fully clothed, and awaited the pleasure of his capturer.

There was no ceremony used by the Riders in the burial of their dead. They were not men to care for forms, and it was well for the dead that Sir Fritz was present to enforce the burial, else the bodies would have been left as they had fallen, their flesh a prey for the wolves of the forest, their bones to be bleached by the sun and rain.

Sir Fritz at length mounted a horse, and his followers also sprang into their saddles, none of their horses having strayed from the enclosure.

The marauder chief rode up to Sir Edred, who was then alone, Aldort having hurried away to catch his horse. The merchant knight rose to his feet as the robber knight reined up near him.

"Sir Edred, you are my prisoner, and a very valu-

able one. We must take care that you do not attempt to escape, especially as your life is safer while you are my prisoner than were you wandering about the forest. I would willingly take your simple promise not to attempt to escape—

"I will make no promise not to try to escape," interrupted Sir Edred, quickly. "At what sum do you fix my ransom?"

"That has not been decided. I warn you that you have two enemies in the forest who desire nothing so much as your death."

"There is not a knave in all your number whom gold cannot purchase," replied Sir Edred, scornfully. "But why do you speak of two enemies when you are all my enemies?"

"Because neither I nor any of our association is your personal enemy. But there are two men, both of noble birth and now in the forest, not openly of our number, but secretly our chiefs, who warned us that you were coming from Zweibrudden, and whose desire is that you shall be put to death immediately upon being taken."

"Personal foes! I knew not that I had any so bitter," remarked Sir Edred, in surprise.

"Did you ever offend one called in Zweibrudden Black Senlis?"

"Black Senlis! Is he not the Baron of Karlwald—the son of Hermann von Arden, Baron of Zweibrudden?"

"The same; and he is one of the two of whom I speak."

"I have seen the man and heard much evil of him, but have never given him any cause to hate me."

"And the old Baron Hermann of Zweibrudden?"

"I have met him. But is he the other of the two who wish my immediate death?"

"He is."

"Since you know so much—know that they desire my death—you may know why they desire it."

"I am not ready to tell you, even if I know," replied Sir Fritz, evasively. "But they are in the forest. They and I are scarcely friends, and may soon be enemies. I cannot say how long they may remain in the forest. I say to you, regard me as your friend while they are near us. I shall keep your capture a secret from them. If you value your life more than your wealth, and the hope of being reunited to Lady Van De Veer more than your diamonds, make no attempt to escape from the place in which I shall confine you so long as it pleases me."

"How long may it please you to confine me?"

"Until the Von Ardens are no longer in the Giant Forest. But we will speak of these matters hereafter," said Sir Fritz as several of his men came up.

To them he said:

"Bind Sir Edred securely. If he make any attempt to escape, prevent his escape without injury to his person, if possible. At all events, prevent his escape. I warn you again, Sir Edred, that your life is safe only so long as you are my prisoner."

The diamond merchant, not knowing whether to regard Sir Fritz as a friend or an enemy, was soon bound with cords and placed upon the horse of one of the plunderers who had fallen by his hand.

"To the cave," was now the brief command of the robber chief as he rode across the enclosure towards the forest.

Six of his men followed him, two of them riding near Sir Edred, each holding in his hand the end of a cord fastened around the neck of the diamond merchant.

Stout-hearted Sir Edred set his teeth in silent rage as this indignity was put upon him. Resistance was useless, and expostulations he knew would be of no avail. So, resigning himself to the protection of Heaven, he submitted in silence, and was blindfolded.

All possibility of escape from his captors was now cut off, and, like a bound and blind Samson, Sir Edred was wholly at the mercy of those near him as they again entered the narrow, tangled, and seemingly endless paths of the great forest.

(To be continued.)

THE JURIES ACT, 1870.—An under-sheriff writes to us (*Law Times*) as follows:—"One of the Recorder of Exeter's criticisms on this most discreditable Act is unfounded. The persons who issue the precepts for juries in civil cases at the assizes are not the plaintiff or the defendant, but the judges, who by their assize precept direct the sheriff to summon jurors 'for the trial of all issues, whether civil or criminal, which may come on for trial at the assizes' (15 & 16 Vict. c. 76, s. 105). Of the jurors summoned to the assizes, those who serve in the civil court will get 10s. a day, whilst those who serve in the criminal court will get nothing. How the former court will be crowded! and what urgency of bailiffs, and incessant threats of fines will be necessary to procure a jury for the Crown Court! Every criminal jury will disagree and retire, as a matter of course, in order that they may have a

chance of getting their 10s. at the other end. By section 23 of the new Act, jurors are to be allowed refreshment at their own expense. Does this apply to a jury locked up during the progress of a criminal trial? They have hitherto been taken charge of by the sheriff, and the expense incurred has been repaid by the Crown (not without a squabble). It would appear that it is intended to include such a case, and if so, twelve jurors who are paid nothing for their services may be kept together for many days and nights, will have to club for their maintenance, and will be unanimous as to the quality or quantity of it, and those who have no money in their pockets (a case which happens sometimes) will go without food."

THE PEARLS OF ERIN;

OR,
THE HALF SISTERS.

CHAPTER XV.

MRS. LIFFEY, Michael Kildare's grim and elderly housekeeper, softly opened the front door of her employer's dwelling, and passed out upon the steps.

The night was pleasant, with mild air and starlight. In the semi-gloom the cab which the woman had engaged was standing by the curb-stone. The cabman was in the act of alighting to announce his arrival.

Mrs. Liffey ordered the man to take out Lady Nora's box, which he hastened to do. While he was thus engaged, Lord Kildare and the lawyer hurried to their captive, keeping a close hold upon her, to prevent any attempt at escape, and put her into the cab. Both followed her into the vehicle, keeping a tight grasp upon her arms.

It was well for them that they were thus guarded. Lady Nora's big brown eyes were bright and keen, and on the look out for any chance for flight, and her lithe, slender figure, with nerves like steel, was ready to spring in any direction at the proper moment.

Mrs. Liffey secured the house door, and came back to the cab, as the driver was mounting his box. She gave him the order in a low tone, and entered the vehicle, closing the door securely behind her.

The vehicle then bowed rapidly down the street. Lady Nora secretly marked their route.

They proceeded to the southward and westward, crossed the river Liffey, traversed the south-western portion of the city, crossed the Circular Road, and, once out of the town, sped along yet more rapidly.

Lady Nora secretly noted all the landmarks by the way, with a view to her escape and return to Dublin on foot.

"We are on the road to Clondalkin," she thought. "That is Drinnagh Castle to the right. I have been out here before, and can easily find my way back to Dublin. Here is where the two roads cross. We are going to Clondalkin, and how much further I cannot guess."

The question was soon decided.

The cab came to a halt in the outskirts of the village of Clondalkin, before a small, plain, red brick cottage, which stood in the midst of a garden. A row of tall, funeral yew trees stood within the palings of the tall fence, screening the cottage from more than casual glances. The garden was ample, shut in by high palings on every side and by yew trees, and was not overlooked at any point by neighbouring houses.

This gloomy, lonely place had been christened Yew Cottage, and was the property of Mrs. Liffey, her husband's legacy to her. It was usually let at a remunerative rate, but, as Mr. Kildare's housekeeper had said, it was now vacant through the failure of its late tenant to meet his engagements.

Mrs. Liffey descended from the cab and approached the high garden gate. It was not locked, and she flung it open, holding it ajar while Lord Kildare and the lawyer assisted their captive to the ground.

"You can wait," said Michael Kildare, addressing the cabman. "There's a shilling," he added, tossing him a silver coin. "No doubt you'll find a public-house open somewhere in the neighbourhood. You can look for one and treat yourself, as soon as you have fetched in the young lady's box. We shall probably be inside about fifteen minutes."

Tightening his hold on Lady Nora's arm, the lawyer hurried her within the grounds of Yew Cottage. Mrs. Liffey preceded the captive and captors up the lonely, dismal walk, and mounted the low stone steps, sounding the heavy brass knocker with emphasis.

Presently, just as Lord Kildare and the lawyer, with Lady Nora between them, also mounted the steps, an upper window was cautiously raised, and a night-capped head protruded itself, and a hoarse voice asked, in trembling, gasping tones:

"Who's there? What are ye wanting at this hour of the night? I'll call the police. I'll—"

"Whist, now!" said Mrs. Liffey, in a low, warn-

ing voice. "Have you lost all your wits, Catherine? It's I—your sister, Margaret Liffey! Come down and let us in like a decent Christian woman, and don't be rousing the neighbours with your foolish palaver!"

Mrs. Liffey's sister gave a great gasp of astonishment, and promptly slammed the window down.

The cabman came up with the trunk and deposited it on the gravel walk, then hastening in quest of a public-house, as he had been recommended.

He was scarcely gone, when steps were heard within the cottage, and the door was opened from within by Mrs. Liffey's sister, who had hastily attired herself.

"My sister Mrs. Fogarty," announced Mrs. Liffey. "Catherine, I've brought you company. This young lady is Lady Nora Kildare, daughter of the late Earl of Kildare. The young gentleman is the present earl. And this is Mr. Kildare, my employer, the famous lawyer of Dublin."

Mrs. Fogarty seemed overwhelmed at this announcement of the rank of her guests. Muttering a half-inaudible greeting, she courtied repeatedly, and then, taking up her candle from the hall shelf, led the way into the parlour.

The visitors followed.

Lady Nora looked curiously at the tenant of Yew Cottage, but her heart sank as she studied her countenance. Even her hopeful spirit could find no grounds for encouragement in that hard, harsh face.

Unlike her sister, Mrs. Fogarty presented no indications of her rank as a "reduced gentlewoman." She was a tall, coarse, heavy woman, massive and bony, and without superfluous flesh. She had long, swinging arms, and a heavy stride like that of a labouring man. Her low, freckled forehead was surmounted by a thick mat of red hair, which waved and kinked, and was with difficulty gathered into a tiny knot at the back of her head.

There was a certain air of elegance and imperiousness about Mrs. Liffey, an attempt at stylishness, an evident desire to appear a great lady, but her sister presented a marked contrast to all this. Barren of every grace, hard, harsh and angular, Mrs. Fogarty was the same in mind and heart as in person, and was the woman of all others to further the schemes of Lord Kildare and his kinsman.

"I am sure I never expected to have Lord and Lady Kildare under the same roof with me, and visitors like," muttered Mrs. Fogarty, placing chairs for her guests. "This is an unexpected honour. I suppose your lordship and ladyship are recently married—"

"Don't you know more about the Kildare family than that?" interrupted Mrs. Liffey, impatiently.

"This young lady is Lady Nora Kildare, and is not married. The young nobleman is Lord Kildare, the new earl, who has just come into his own. You must have read all about him in the papers. The Dublin papers have been full of his story, how that he's the son of the late Lord Redmond Kildare by an English actress, and how the proofs of his identity were so strong that the guardians of Lady Nora declined to contest his claims. The whole kingdom has been ringing with the story. They called it a 'romance in real life.' You surely must have read it—"

"But I haven't," interposed Mrs. Fogarty. "I don't take the papers. It's a waste of money; and besides, why should I be fashing myself over other people's news when it's nothing to me? I never read the papers. I never got no good by doing so, and I can't see any use in it. But I took the young couple to be man and wife—I beg pardon—I meant lord and lady—"

"That's what we mean to have it," declared Mrs. Liffey. "Mr. Kildare is one of the guardians of Lady Nora, the only guardian now, in fact, for since she's lost her fortune Sir Russel washes his hands of her, and won't trouble himself about her. As Lady Nora's guardian, Mr. Kildare wants her to marry Lord Kildare. She is poor and his lordship is rich. But my lady is perverse, and refuses to do as she is bid. She wants to marry a beggarly lord up in Antrim, instead of this fine match. So her guardian has brought her to you, Catherine, to be kept prisoner here until she gives in. You can break her spirit if any one can!"

"That I can," asserted Mrs. Fogarty, her small eyes snapping viciously. "I can bring her to her duty. But what am I to have for my trouble?"

Mrs. Liffey reflected. Mr. Kildare, however, answered the question for himself.

"If you keep her so close a prisoner that none of the neighbours even suspect that you have an inmate here," the lawyer said, in his soft, mild voice, which had grown more terrible to Lady Nora than the loudest, fiercest utterances of another, "and if you compel her to accept Lord Kildare as her future husband, I will pay you the sum of one hundred pounds!"

Mrs. Fogarty's face glowed with greedy desire.

"You may depend on me!" she cried. "I'll make her stay here so unpleasant that she'll be glad to

take refuge in Lord Kildare's arms. A hundred pounds!"

"And if you succeed, Catherine," said Mrs. Liffey, all of whose ambition and hopes were based on that success, all of whose future grandeur were built on that precarious foundation, "I will give you a title-deed of this house. I shall be well able to spare it, and I'd give everything I now own in the world to see Lady Nora Kildare the countess of the young earl."

The scheming housekeeper understood her sister well. This last offer, added to the former, quickened Mrs. Fogarty's resolve into an unyielding determination. Now Cottage was to her what the position as Mrs. Michael Kildare was to Mrs. Liffey. There was scarcely anything on earth she would not do to gain it.

"It shall be done," she said, abruptly. "I will prepare her room while you are here."

She turned and strode heavily from the room, proceeding to a back apartment, where she procured another light. She then tramped upstairs with a step like a grenadier.

She was absent some ten or fifteen minutes, during which period the cabman returned, announcing his presence by a ring at the gate bell. There was a grim smile on her gaunt face, as Mrs. Fogarty at last returned to her visitors.

"My lady's room is ready," she announced, "and your cab is here. We had better take her upstairs before you go."

The lawyer arose at once.

"Be kind enough to wait here, my lord," he said, addressing his kinsman. "I will be down directly."

He seized the arm of Lady Nora, but she flung off his grasp as if it had been the coil of a serpent.

Her young face was very pale, so pale as to startle her false guardian, and from out the dead whiteness her great sunny eyes glowed and burned like dusky stars. Every feature of her lovely countenance was instinct with a stern and terrible indignation.

"Do not touch me, Michael Kildare!" she said, in a suppressed and quivering voice. "Do not lay your finger upon me! False friend, false guardian, false kinsman! My father trusted you and loved you. I have trusted you, too, and loved you, and you have plotted against my peace, connived with my enemies, robbed me of my inheritance, and now would deprive me of my liberty. Oh, Michael! It is worse than all the rest to learn your treachery."

A pitious look crept into her sternly scornful eyes. Even yet, it seemed, she could scarcely believe in his baseness.

The moment for weakness and faltering had gone by for Michael Kildare.

His soft, full lips hardened into a cruel smile. His eyes, that had always looked so benignantly upon his noble young kinswoman, shone with a hard glitter. His mild, benevolent face glowed with an expression of triumph and malevolent determination.

"You are theatrical, Nora," he said, the words sounding strangely when uttered in his gentle, melodious voice. "Your denunciations of me are worthy of the stage. I am surprised at your display of temper. You stand to me in the place of a daughter, and I am bound to do a father's part by you. I choose to shut you up here for your disobedience and contumacy; but in the hour you choose to submit yourself to my will, and marry the man I have chosen for you, you shall receive your freedom; and with your freedom you shall also receive a husband, a lofty rank and title, wealth, a stately home, every good this world can give. My poor misguided child! It is for your good I am working now."

Lady Nora put up her hand in a gesture of angry dissent. A pained look convulsed her features, but her eyes were fixed steadily upon her guardian in increasing sternness.

"Michael Kildare," she said, solemnly, "I see you at last as you are! Hypocrite! I know now that your whole life has been a falsehood; Under all your softness and sweetness has been hidden an iron nature. It is like a bank of hardest rock, I saw once, wreathed over with vines and flowers. Under the mask of friendship to me you have hidden a deadly enmity."

"By Heaven, no, Nora—"

"You need not deny it. I should not believe your denial. I see you at last stripped of all the poetry of gentleness and softness. I know you at last for a viper, and I loathe and despise you."

The bland, smooth face of the little lawyer reddened. He looked grieved and shocked rather than angry.

"Nora!" he said, reproachfully.

"Michael, do not put on that look of injured innocence!" said Lady Nora, sternly and steadily. "You can no longer impose upon me. I know you at last," and she spoke with a slow impressiveness, "as you are! I know, too, that this young man, now known as the Earl of Kildare, but in whose claim exists some secret defect known only to you—"

I know that he is but a cat's-paw in your hands! You stand behind him greater than he, directing his movements, guiding and controlling him! You are like a chess-player, and this question of the ownership of Point Kildare is the game you have in hand. It has suited you to advance this man's claims, and to pass him off to the world as the true and rightful heir, but you know in your heart that I am the owner of Kildare!"

"This is nonsense, Nora!"

"It is Heaven's own truth!" cried the girl, with sudden passionateness. "You know that I am no coward. You know that I cannot be forced to marry this man. You may as well spare yourself the trouble of attempting to coerce me. No amount of force can ever drive me into an act against which my whole being revolts!"

"This is fine talk!" sneered Michael Kildare. "We will test its truth. A weak girl cannot hold out long against my will!"

A change passed over Lady Nora's face. A passionate pain looked from her sad, stern eyes, and showed itself about her sweet mouth. Despite all her high courage, all her faith in her own principles, she shrank from the ordeal before her. Her grief at her guardian's cruel treachery convulsed her soul anew.

"Michael," she said, lifting her hands and her piteous eyes to him, "it is not too late to turn back! In the name of my dead father, who loved you, I entreat you to return to your duty. I am willing to forgive you, and overlook your wrong to me, if you choose to repent now. Restore me to my rights, and I will not only bless you, but I will reward you! Remember that I am an orphan girl, who was confided to your protection by my trusting father. You cannot betray the trust of the dead, and wrong the defenceless, without future retribution. In mercy to yourself and me, do what is right. Refuse," she added, as she met his cold, impassive glance, and realised that her pleading had been thrown away, "and when the hour of my triumph comes, as it will come, you may find me also merciless."

The lawyer's lip curled.

"This is mere child's talk," he said. "When your 'hour of triumph' comes, you will be Countess of Kildare, and will thank me for my present firmness. As to all your accusations, they are but the accusations of an unreasoning childish anger. I hope, when I come to see you, to find you in a better spirit. Now, if you please, we will go up to your room."

He laid his small, fat, soft hand on her arm, about which it closed like a vice. In obedience to a nod from him, Mrs. Liffey seized the girl's other arm.

Mrs. Fogarty, taking her extra light, bade them follow her, and led the way upstairs.

The lawyer and his housekeeper half led, half carried the young girl between them up to the second story.

"This way, Mr. Kildare," said Mrs. Fogarty, taking her way to a back chamber. "This is my lady's room. 'Tisn't much of a chamber for one that's used to suites of rooms in a big castle, but she can leave it for the castle any day she likes!"

"The dark room!" exclaimed Mrs. Liffey, approvingly. "A good idea, Catherine. I'd like to see my Lady Nora escape from that!"

Mrs. Fogarty threw open the door of the rear room and passed in, holding the light well above her head.

The lawyer and Mrs. Liffey followed her with their struggling captive.

The room was small, being about nine feet square. It was simply the end of the hall partitioned off. It had been used by various occupants of the house as a dark bedroom, as a lumber-room, and as a store-room. It was now furnished barely and simply as a bedroom.

It had no windows, but was supplied meagrely with light through a small glazed ventilator over the door. The floor was covered with a threadbare carpet. There was a straight-backed chair of uncomfortable shape, a small table, and a narrow, low, iron bedstead, upon which was a hard, though clean, and freshly draped bed.

Nora's trunk had been brought up by Mrs. Fogarty, and stood against the wall.

Meagre and bare and dismal, with no outlook, with only the bare walls on every side, and no gleam of light save what struggled in from the hall, this was a terrible prison for the luxuriously bred young heiress of Kildare Castle.

Yet she walked into it proudly, when once she had been thrust within its portal, as a queen might walk to her throne.

Whatever her secret terror and anguish, she did not choose to betray them to these vulture eyes.

"It is not too late to yield, Nora," said the lawyer, softly and pityingly. "I would save you this terrible ordeal—this fearful experience. Men have gone mad in windowless dungeons like this. My poor Nora, you have but to say the word to be restored to the light and to liberty!"

"I prefer darkness and imprisonment to a loveless marriage," said Lady Nora, coolly.

"Then you shall have a full trial of them!" said Michael Kildare, hastily. "Mrs. Fogarty," he added, turning to the woman, who was standing with arms akimbo, "when Lady Nora yields and promises solemnly to marry Lord Kildare, I desire you to put her into a better chamber at once, and to send a messenger to me with a sealed letter declaring her submission. On receipt of such a letter, I shall come at once. Now, Nora," he concluded, again addressing his young kinswoman, "I will say goodbye!"

He moved towards her, all seeming pity, tenderness, and benevolence, as if to embrace her.

Lady Nora regarded him in a haughty surprise.

"Do not touch me!" she said, quietly. "I am no longer imposed upon. I want none of your hypocritical caresses, you wolf in sheep's clothing!"

The lawyer quailed before the indignant fire of her eyes, and without a word stole silently out of the room. Mrs. Liffey, with a swaggering, supercilious air, and with a menacing look at the captive, followed him. Mrs. Fogarty took up the streaming candle and went out last, halting outside to close and lock the door.

Then the young Lady Nora, in her close, dark prison, in the centre of which she stood with gleaming white face and wide dilated eyes, heard her three enemies go down the stairs, and watched through the ventilator over the door the fading glooms of their departing light; and a few minutes later, still standing there, she heard her enemies depart, heard the rattling of the bolts and chains on the outer door, and heard Mrs. Fogarty tramp heavily up the stairs to her own room.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHILE these events were transpiring, and changing the whole course of Lady Nora's existence, where was she who loved the young heiress with more than a sister's tenderness—where was the unfortunate Lady Kathleen?

On parting with her stepister at the Drogheda railway station in Dublin, Lady Kathleen, as has been said, entered a cab with Bassantyne and her maid, and drove directly to a hotel. Bassantyne's fellow fugitive from justice sat upon the box with the driver, and on arriving at the hotel he escaped her observation in the mist and fog of the gloomy night.

A suite of rooms was speedily secured, and Lady Kathleen, accompanied by her maid, retired to her own private apartment. Bassantyne, attended by the man who acted as his valet, departed to his own quarters, which were a portion of her ladyship's suite. The doors between were, however, locked, and Lady Kathleen put the key in her pocket.

The small parlour, with bedroom adjoining, which had been assigned to the young bride, was very bright and cheerful. There was a fire in the grate, and the gas was burning in the cluster of ground glass globes which depended from the ceiling.

One of Lady Kathleen's trunks was brought up, and Mary unpacked it. Her young mistress then removed her damp outer garments and donned a pair of pink velvet slippers and pink cashmere dressing-gown, and loosened her damp yellow hair, permitting it to flow in a golden mass over her shoulders, after the manner of Lady Nora. She then drew up her chair to the fire and warmed her hands over the blaze.

"You may ring, Mary," she said, wearily, when the maid's duties received an intermission. "I will have my supper up here."

Mary obeyed, giving the bell a vigorous pull.

"Will—the master have his supper here too?"

The girl asked, hesitatingly.

"The 'master'?" said Lady Kathleen. "You have no master, Mary. I am married to Mr. Bassantyne, it is true, but he is no more to me than a stranger. He will not take his supper with me."

The waiter appearing, Lady Kathleen sent down her order, and was presently served with her repast, which she insisted upon her maid sharing with her. After supper she sat for hours by her fire thinking steadily, and at last arose wearily and went to bed.

She was early astir in the morning. About eight o'clock, as she sat by the fire in her parlour, dressed in her black silk travelling robe, after she had given her order for breakfast, a knock was heard at the door, and a waiter appeared, bringing her ladyship a note from Bassantyne.

It proved to be a demand to be allowed to breakfast with her, Bassantyne declaring that her conduct was calculated to bring suspicion upon him, and warning her that any disgrace that could come to him would be sure to fall upon her.

To this missive Lady Kathleen replied simply by the word "come."

A few minutes later Bassantyne made his appearance. He had attired himself with scrupulous care. His long beard was carefully combed and waved and divided into two long points, which nearly covered his bosom. He came in bowing and

smiling, with the grace of a dancing-master, seeming to possess not a care or anxiety in the world. A swift glance around the room assured him that Lady Kathleen was alone, her maid being in the adjacent bedroom.

"Good morning, my beautiful wife!" he said, with an affectation of gaiety. "You look none the worse for your journey."

"Compliments can be spared between us," returned Lady Kathleen, gravely. "Be seated. Breakfast is ordered, and will be served directly."

Bassantyne drew a chair towards the fire and sat down.

"I have a fancy that I saw a familiar face in the hotel lobby last night," he observed, with visible uneasiness. "It will be well to dispense with a hotel waiter; he might be a detective or spy in disguise. My man Murple, you know, can attend upon us, and that will keep him away from the tap, which he likes to frequent."

"Very well," said Lady Kathleen, indifferently. "Your man can attend upon us."

Bassantyne's gloomy face brightened a little. "About your plans, Kathleen?" he asked. "At what hour can we leave for Wicklow?"

"I am not decided," was the reply. "I am a little troubled about poor Nora, although I know she is with true and loving friends. I think I will drive round and call upon her this morning."

"And risk my betrayal and discovery!" cried Bassantyne. "How thoughtless you are, Kathleen! In a large city like Dublin, no doubt a watch is kept for me. We ought not to prolong our stay a minute beyond what is absolutely necessary. I have ordered a cab to be at the door in time to take us to the station for the next train."

A faint glow of displeasure tinged Lady Kathleen's cheeks, but she made no objection.

"You see, Kathleen," pursued Bassantyne, "that with the reward that is offered for my capture, I may well be uneasy and anxious. We can't be too careful. Of course I am well disguised, but then these detectives are sharp fellows, and if they look for me at all, they will look for me under a disguise. They won't expect to see a man on whose head a price is set wandering about and answering in every particular to the items in the handbills. They know that I graduated out in Australia, and that I am up to all kinds of dodges. But they will hardly suspect," he added, with a grim smile, "to find the bird they're wanting in the acknowledged husband of the proudest beauty in all Ireland. I'm safe here, if anywhere."

At this juncture the waiter was heard approaching in the corridor, and Bassantyne arose and walked to the window, where he stood with averted face and negligent attitude, while the attendant spread the table and set out upon it the dainty morning meal.

"You needn't wait," said Bassantyne, carelessly, when the waiter had finished. "Send my man to me, and there's something for you."

He tossed the man a small silver coin, and again looked down into the street. The waiter went out, and Bassantyne then came forward, taking his seat at the table.

Lady Kathleen sat opposite to him, behind the small coffee-urn.

She poured out the coffee without speaking, her face as cold and grave as if carved in marble. There was a haughty coldness in her manner that effectually kept her sinister bridegroom at a distance. He dared not address a word of tenderness or familiarity to her, although his black eyes beamed with a look of admiration that was very near akin to love.

They were silently engaged with their breakfast, when the door opened, and Murple, Bassantyne's valet, entered.

Lady Kathleen looked up, surveying him with perceptible curiosity.

He returned her glances with interest.

He was a coarse, brutal, hang-dog looking fellow, dressed in shabby, slouching black garments. His hair was cropped close to his head. His cheeks, unshaven and dark, gave to the lower half of his face a black-muzzled appearance. His forehead was low and retreating, and a long, livid scar nearly traversed it. This scar, of peculiar shape, although partly hidden by a pair of very bushy eyebrows, gave the man a strangely sinister look.

Lady Kathleen shuddered as she met this man's furtive, cat-like glance. She wondered in her heart how Bassantyne could consort with a man like this, although she felt that Bassantyne was at heart no better than Murple.

"Come on and wait at the table, Murple," said his master, impatiently, with a glance towards the inner room. "Her ladyship's maid may pop out any minute, and you will arouse her suspicions. Lady Kathleen, this is my valet, Murple, a good servant enough, but a little queer. Been down to the tap, Murple?"

The man was pale and trembling, as if he had recently received a nervous shock. He approached the table, and took his station behind Lady Kathleen's chair, but his lips were blue and his eyes

distended. Bassantyne began to experience a vague sense of alarm.

"If you don't quit drinking, Murple," he said, threateningly, "I'll turn you out! I swear I won't protect a man who does his best to imperil himself and me too! I have kept you with me because we were in the same boat, and I didn't care to lose sight of you. But I'll go to the Continent and lose myself and you too. I won't live in constant fear—"

"I haven't been drinking," said Murple, hoarsely. "I went down and sent the telegram to Ballyconnor that you told me to, and on my way back I stepped into the tap—"

"That's what I'm complaining of!" declared Bassantyne, angrily. "Why must you get intoxicated?"

"I am not," asserted Murple, still very huskily. "I ordered a glass of half-and-half, and as I stood in the tap a drinking of it, up comes a chap and orders a pint of Guinness, and he falls a looking at me, and I looks at him, and all of a sudden I recognise him—"

"You recognised him!" cried Bassantyne, in a startled voice, and full of excitement.

"Yes, sir. He's a ticket-of-leave chap we knowed in Australia. He is Lame Bill."

"Lame Bill!" ejaculated Bassantyne, in consternation, his jaw falling.

"Yes, sir, it's Lame Bill. I knowed him the minute I fairly got my eyes on to him, although he was dressed like a gentleman."

"Lame Bill!" repeated Bassantyne, in increasing terror. "Why, the fellow hates me as he hates a policeman! I knocked him down once and he vowed to be revenged on me. Did he recognise you?"

"I don't know. I'm pretty well disguised, what with dyeing my red hair black and my red face brown, and wearing these 'ere heavy black eyebrows in place of them red ones that got singed off years ago! But the scar can't be disguised, and I own my heart went down to my boots when Lame Bill says, 'Queer scar you've got there, my man. It's like a scar on a chap I knowed in Australia.'"

"He did recognise you then?"

"I think not," muttered Murple, dubiously. "I said something about never having been to Australia, and he sauntered off. And I come up to your room, and along comes the waiter telling me to come here. I think I've thrown Lame Bill off the scent. He has made up his mind that I ain't his man. But I'm sorry I come to Ireland at all," he added, wiping his brows vigorously.

"Why so? You are an Englishman, and Ireland is the safest place for you."

Murple's glances shifted uneasily under his master's gaze. He wiped his brows again on his red cotton handkerchief.

"I said I was an Englishman," he remarked, after a brief pause, "but I ain't. I'm an Irishman, and the police will look for me in Ireland."

"The furies! Why, you were known as 'Newville, the English crackman,' in the colony!"

"Yes; but my name ain't Newville any more than it's Murple, which is the new name you gave me. My real name's Tim Fogarty. My mother lives near Dublin, at Clondalkin, in lodgings and about; and it's her sister as is housekeeper to Mr. Michael Kildare, the lawyer; and the police must be on the look-out for me in Dublin."

Bassantyne turned pale.

"You miserable idiot!" he ejaculated. "How dared you run your head directly into a noose like this? Why didn't you tell me the truth. You have ruined us both!"

He got up and began to pace the room hastily, with a great terror in his face.

"I will never be taken alive!" he muttered, the great drops starting on his forehead. "I will die by my own hand first! The ignominy of the gallows will never be mine! Fool! Why did I resume my own honourable name when I returned to England—the name which has never been associated with guilt, and which an honourable family bears to-day with pride, unconscious of my errors? I will die before the world and those at the home I left years ago shall know that Nicol Bassantyne is the man of a dozen aliases and a dozen crimes, the man whose life is forfeit to the State!"

He plunged his hand into his coat pocket and withdrew a small pistol-case. In this he carried, ready for instant use, a pair of tiny loaded pistols.

Dropping the case back into his pocket, he hurried to and fro until he had regained his composure, and then he went to the mirror and regarded his reflection narrowly.

"He won't recognise me unless he's on my track," he said. "And he can't suspect my presence here. It is not suspected that you and I are together, Murple. We must act promptly, and the danger may be averted."

"How, sir?" demanded Murple, eagerly. "Instead of going directly to Wicklow with us," said Bassantyne, "you must manoeuvre to throw Lame Bill off your trail. You must slip out of the

hotel by some back way, and make across the country to some station on the Drogheda line. Go to Drogheda, and from there go across the country to Mullingar. At one place or the other you must procure a wig, a gray one, and fit yourself out like a village pedagogue. Then go afoot to Tullamore, and by rail to Athy, afoot again to Ballyconnor. It's a roundabout way, but it'll tire out any dogs of detectives, and Lame Bill ain't 'cute enough to track you by all those windings. Can you do this?"

Murple's face glowed with reviving hope.

"I can do it!" he ejaculated.

"Then be off at once. Lose no time. We shall be safe, after all. Be on your guard, Murple—and avoid the taps."

"I am out of money," said Murple, hesitatingly. "Lady Kathleen will supply you," said Bassantyne, coolly. "You'll want a matter of ten pounds."

Lady Kathleen took the desired amount from her purse and laid it on the table. Murple snatched it up greedily and put it in his pocket.

After a few minutes' further conversation with his fellow fugitive, Murple withdrew.

A little later he stole out of the hotel by a back way, and escaped unseen.

"I wonder whether Lame Bill knew him or did not know him?" muttered Bassantyne, uneasily. "Pity about that scar; it's a mark you can't hide. I ought to have thrown Murple overboard, and I would have done so if I had dared to. He threatened to split on me if I didn't keep him with me. He knew too much about me to be permitted to run loose."

He settled his necktie and walked slowly to the window, looking out.

"Our cab is waiting, Kathleen," he said. "We must be off—and as I live," he added, agitatedly, "there's Lame Bill pacing to and fro on the walk, waiting for some one to come out! Can he be waiting for me? Does he scent the truth?"

The question was still on his lips when two of the hotel servants entered to announce the carriage and take down Lady Kathleen's luggage.

"I must risk it!" thought Bassantyne, in a mortal terror. "It's like running the gauntlet. How can I bear Lame Bill's eyes on me? Will he read my identity through my disguise?"

The servants went out, and Bassantyne ran again to the window, peering out cautiously.

He beheld a lame man pacing to and fro on the pavement like a sentry on guard, his face turned towards the hotel entrance in evident eager inquiry. He was unmistakably waiting for some one.

Was he waiting for Bassantyne?

Desperate, and almost mad with terror and anxiety, Bassantyne schooled his face to calmness, and turning to Lady Kathleen, said:

"Take my arm, Kathleen. Lean on me. Everything depends on how we pass this ordeal. There's a man waiting below who knows me, who hates me, and who would give ten years of his life to deliver me up to the police, and handle the reward offered for me. My downfall is your ruin. We sink or we swim together. Come!"

He extended his arm.

Lady Kathleen drew her veil over her white face, as her maid came out of the inner room and preceded them downstairs, in obedience to a gesture from her mistress, and her ladyship then took Bassantyne's arm, and they passed down the stairs together.

(To be continued.)

In the absence of any special measures for preventing the sale to the public of the milk of cows affected by the prevailing epizootic in infected districts, it will be, at least, some safeguard against anticipated evil events to use none but boiled milk when this is practicable.

On the Crown Prince's birthday he and his staff dined with the King of Prussia at the Prefecture at Versailles, where covers were laid for eighty. The King gave a toast, "To you by whose means we are here!" The King has hitherto refused the First Class, but on this day the Crown Prince placed one on his royal father's breast, saying: "How can you think, sire, that your officers can wear it if you will not?"

EARTHQUAKE IN CANADA.—A telegram from Canada announces that an earthquake shock was felt throughout the provinces of Ontario and Quebec on the 20th ult. The shock appeared to travel eastwards. In Quebec city some chimneys fell, and two persons were injured by falling bricks. General alarm was felt, the people rushing into the street. At Montreal the shock was also severe. The judges and others ran out precipitately, and the bells rang by the vibration. In Toronto the shock was less severe; but was distinctly felt. The steeple of St. George's Church was seen to sway, walls were shaken, and furniture moved from its place. At St. Katharine's Church some windows were broken. The shock was first felt at Quebec 11.15 a.m., and the vibration lasted between 30 and 40 seconds.



[H.B.H. PRINCESS LOUISA CAROLINE ALBERTA.]

THE ROYAL WEDDING.

IN all ages and times, in all climates and countries, and among all peoples, a wedding has ever been held to afford the most legitimate occasion for enjoyment. The man must have a sad heart indeed who cannot congratulate a young couple when they stand side by side at the altar, avowing their mutual affection, dedicating their lives to each other, and asking the blessing of Heaven upon the solemn compact which binds them together till death shall part them. People rejoice at a christening feast or a birthday, and attach a special importance to the coming of age either of their own sons or those of their neighbours, but it is reserved for the wedding to bring out the full tide of good-will from the heart. Modern fashions have curtailed the hours during which the bride and bridegroom share in the festivities their nuptial occasion, but it is not very long since the bride led off the first dance with her husband, and the bridegroom led off the second with the chief bridesmaid, and the newly married couple were the centres of a great circle of enjoyment that lasted till cock-crow. It may be that the new ways are wiser than the old, but one thing is certain, that the good-will and the hearty congratulations are as warm as ever, and a wedding is still held to be the one time when even the sonnet and most puritanical of folk must be jovial and hearty.

A Royal wedding has always been a source of much popular enjoyment in England. Many of us can recollect the tremendous exultation with which the nuptials of our Queen with her lamented consort, Prince Albert, were observed, and all of us remember how the entire country gave way to merry-making when the Prince of Wales was married. It is true that the marriages of the Princess Alice and the Princess Helena were privately celebrated, and that the only token of public recognition was the dower which Parliament liberally bestowed upon the Royal ladies. But, recollecting that the wed-

ding of their elder sister, Victoria, the Princess Royal, was accompanied with all the forms of public rejoicing, it must be conceded that only the fact of the Queen's personal retirement caused the absence of the usual tokens of popular regard.

For many centuries it has been the unfortunate lot of the English Royal family to be debarred from choosing their partners for themselves, and until the growth of the Constitution had placed the basis of popular government upon an irremovable foundation it was necessary that such a restriction should exist. When the government of this country was despotism tempered by revolution, as it was down to the year 1689, the alliance made by the sovereign was of the greatest importance to the nation. In fact, history plainly shows that in those days the crown was kept or lost by several sovereigns simply by means of the marriages they contracted. Henry the First conciliated the conquered Saxons by his marriage with Matilda of Scotland, the heiress of the Athelings. Henry the Sixth ruined himself by wedding the beautiful and heroic but unpopular Margaret of Anjou, and Henry the Seventh by his wise alliance with the heiress of the House of York prevented the possibility of successful rebellion during his reign. In later days the restriction of the reigning dynasty to partners of Protestant Royal blood has confined their choice to the petty princes and princesses of Germany, and although our statesmen have usually taken care that the requisite number of wives and husbands should be wisely chosen, it has yet been evident that the limitation has been but painfully borne by both the princes and the nation.

We owe to our present Queen so many benefits that it is hard to tell where to begin, and harder to tell where to leave off, when we enumerate them. We have only to compare her political career with that of any preceding sovereign to see how far she has excelled them all in discretion, how sedulously she has in every way consulted what the popular will had declared to be the popular interest. Bu-

when we go beyond the political arena and look upon the Queen's private life, in so far as we know it, we do more than respect the discreet sovereign, we venerate and esteem the good wife and good mother who preserves all her quiet family virtues untarnished amid "the fierce light that beats upon a throne." Who that is more than thirty years old has not, in his time, met Her Majesty going along the street in unassuming guise with her mother beside her and her little children in front of her in her quiet open carriage, and who, seeing her in those, her happy days, could avoid seeing how dear her family ties were to her? Who can have watched her career as a faithful wife, without feeling that the seclusion of her widowhood was but the fitting termination to her married life, so suddenly and sadly darkened? But more than the discreet rule that has brought us through troubled times, more than the home virtues that have set an example, sadly needed, through the length and breadth of the land, do we owe to the Queen, who will some day be recognised, indeed, as she

"Who knew the season when to take
Occasion by the hand and make
The bonds of freedom wider yet."

We owe to her that she, first since James the Second married Anne Hyde because he loved her, two hundred years ago, has allowed and encouraged marriages of affection among her children, and to her we shall owe the possibility that in the next generation we shall see an English queen who is an English woman. The Queen has been singularly fortunate in the marriages of her children. The Princess Royal, she herself tells us, was wooed and won as an ordinary girl should be. The Prince of Wales has certainly one of the sweetest ladies in all Europe for a wife, and the two younger daughters of the Queen—the Princesses Alice and Helena—were notoriously married to men beneath them in station, in order that their happiness might be assured by their constant residence in their own country. In the case of the projected marriage between the Princess Louise—not Louise, as the snobs have it—but Louise, as her register says, the Queen has carried the wholesome rule even farther, and has certainly permitted the wisest match that has been made in England this many a day. It will be a matter of congratulation to all England that this fair daughter of the Queen is going to marry an English nobleman. It will be a matter of rejoicing to every youthful couple in the land that she is going to marry a popular young man just turned twenty-five, and the greatest stickler in Germany for aristocratic alliances could find nothing to grumble at in the list of titles which are the hereditary property of the Marquis of Lorne.

Let us take a peep into futurity and see what the Marquis of Lorne's titles will be when the present Duke of Argyll is gathered to his ancestors. John Douglass Sutherland Campbell, Duke, Marquis, and Earl of Argyll, Marquis of Lorne and Kintyre, Earl of Campbell and Cowal, Viscount Lochan and Glenilla, Lord of Inverary, Morvern, and Tiry in the peerage of Scotland, Baron Sundridge of Coombe in the County of Kent and Lord Hamilton in the peerage of England, Hereditary Master of the Queen's Household and Keeper of the Great Seal of the Kingdom of Scotland, Admiral of the Western Isles, Keeper of Dunoon Castle and of Dunstaffnage, and Hereditary Sheriff of Argyllshire. There's a dainty dish of names to set before a queen! How could she refuse her consent? The young man is a nice young man, and has been on a trip to the Tropics, about which he has written a nice little book. He is only just twenty-five, as he was born on the 6th August, 1845, exactly a year after the Duke of Edinburgh. The Queen tells us that she liked him for his chubbiness and independent ways when he was only two years old, and when we have said that he carries his independence so far that he occasionally votes against his papa, what more can we say? Only this, that the Princess Louise is a fitting consort for the heir of all this wonderful list of dignities. It is true she has only three names to his four, as she was christened Louisa Caroline Alberta, and has no surname. However, he must needs give her his, and they will be quite on a par with each other. The princess was born on the 18th March, 1848, and according to present accounts will be a wife before her next birthday.

May she be a happy wife as Marchioness of Lorne and a happy wife in fulness of time when she shall be Duchess of Argyll, and let us hope that her husband will stick to his familiar titles and not burden his memory with the one more which, would-be well-informed people say, is to be his wedding gift. For ourselves, we have only one speculation to make with regard to the future, and that is closely connected with the question of title. We are all privileged to read in "Good Words" the writings of the present Duke of Argyll, and whatever will that popular publication do if the Duke of Argyll, in the next generation, should be known by any other name?



[THE COMING MESSENGER.]

THE DIAMOND COLLAR.

CHAPTER XXV.

Naught's had, all's spent.

When our desire is got without content. *Macheth.*

GERALDINE TYRROL had done her best, sweet darling, for her beloved bishop's niece.

She had waited and watched for a chance of going unobserved to the palace on her friendly mission. There was no chance all the evening, for her brother had come out of his room, surly as a bear, and had favoured her with his company.

Kind-hearted as little Gerry was, she could not help being glad when Peregrine at length withdrew, and strode about the gardens like one possessed. Just before dark, Gilbert had come from the village on horseback, and handed Tyrrol a strip of paper. Stephanie, adventurously flying out, ostensibly for some holly-leaves for her mistress's glasses, came back with the news that it was a telegram, and that Master Tyrrol seemed very triumphant.

Gerry anxiously heard him go into the dining-room; and, good little creature though she was, she ardently hoped he would pay his devoirs to his father's wines as deeply as was usual with him of late.

He did; and so earnest had been these devotions that the butler was rung for about nine o'clock to assist him to his room.

This was Gerry's chance. She went to her brother's door, locked it, and put the key in her pocket.

She did not care what Perry said to her afterwards, if she could serve the lady whom he was annoying.

Then she and Stephanie went down to the head-groom's cottage, and coaxed old Parkes to drive them over to Bishop Thouvenal's palace; and her coaxing was so sweet that the old fellow was glad to please her.

It was eleven o'clock when the little lady arrived there.

It was about three of the morning when she returned.

There had been a terrible piece of work made by Tyrrol about being locked in his room.

At midnight he had attempted to get out, and had then thundered at his door until the alarmed household had broken in.

Sir Maurice, in amazement, had asked him what it was all about, and Peregrine had burst out like a madman with terrible execrations and menaces at the

unknown person who had dared to put such an affront upon him.

Disregarding Sir Maurice's cold remonstrances, he had rushed off to Geraldine's room, broken open her door (which was also locked), and disclosed the fact that she and her maid were not in the house.

Then he hurried off to Bishopstowe with his man Gilbert, on his own secret mission—leaving his father in a towering passion at both his unruly children.

Had Tyrrol gone the usual round to Bishopstowe he might have come across the fugitives, who were just then leaving the palace; but he plunged across the fields, being behind time, and missed them completely.

The German officials had telegraphed that they would reach Bishopstowe by the one o'clock night train, and that he must meet them.

They had done so, and were awaiting the Honourable Peregrine to be their guide to the palace.

Tyrrol had quite misjudged his sister's motives in stealing from the house. He believed that she had been insane enough to fly to her faithless favourite, Lord Edgar Berney, in a moment of despair; and he was brutal enough to disregard her fate, while he attended to the special business on hand.

His reward was in discovering that he had been too slow for Gerry; she had outwitted him.

When he did come back to Vionna, which he remembered to do towards evening of that fatal day, he found Sir Maurice, stern as the fates, lying in ambush for him.

"So," answered the old statesman, "you have turned informer, spy, and coward, have you? What had you to do with that woman and her supposed crimes, eh? And your sister had, for very shame's sake, to go and warn her of your plots. Poltroon! can the blood of the Tyrrols run in your veins? 'Tis the first time we bred a family spy."

Demonic enough looked the unhappy man as he crawled to his sumptuous chambers. Revenge, they say, is sweet, but so is the acetate of lead which convulses the frame with death throes.

And what a revenge had Tyrrol's been! The woman whom he loved had completely escaped his love or vengeance; and only the good old bishop had fallen a victim. He tried to be glad of it; he muttered like a maniac over and over:

"I've done for him, as I said I would! I've done for him!"

But his heart sank lower and lower with a ghastly remorse all the while; lower and lower, weighted heavily with guilt and terror; lower and lower into that abyss which is bottomless!

Lying face downward in his chamber, this sin-scourged man endured his anguish all night long.

Not a soul would go near him.

Carter and Jonson, having recovered from the dose which Trooper had administered to them and returned to Vionna, dared not venture into his presence, knowing the breach of trust which they had been guilty of.

Geraldine, locked up snugly in her rooms with Stephanie, slept soundly, rejoicing in the good action which she had performed, little knowing how sadly the night had ended for her dear bishop; and Sir Maurice took good care that Tyrrol should not intrude upon his sister in his present supposed state of resentment against her.

After allowing a reasonable time to elapse in which his master's rage might cool, Jonson skulked into his presence to have a look at his patron. He was all in a haze about the events of that night, when Trooper, Carter and he had had such jolly work in the servants' hall at the bishop's; but he had heard enough since to fear very much that he had put his foot in it.

So it was with servile obsequiousness that he brought in Tyrrol's morning papers, instead of Gilbert, and attracted his attention by his usual cough.

Tyrrol rose hastily from the lounge upon which he had been extended, and his haggard face grew dark with choleric fury.

Jonson proffered the papers with a cringeing smile.

"You ain't wanted me for some days, your honour," ventured he. "I hopes as how I aren't in your black-books for nothink as I couldn't help, your honour?"

"Keep out of my way in future, my fine fellow," returned Tyrrol, in a choked voice.

Jonson's face fell.

"What does your honour mean?" he asked, in a craven manner.

"Be off! I'll not endure the sight of you," exclaimed his master, fiercely.

"But what does your honour mean to do about it?" asked Jonson, retreating a step.

"Nothing whatever. How dared you intrude upon me without leave?"

"Heyday! But what does your honour mean to do about the two hundred guineas which your honour were to give me for—"

"Be silent!" roared his master, frantically. "Are you going to haunt—to haunt me with your wretched prating? I tell you, man, go away!"

Gasping, shaking his fist, Tyrrol was a frightful sight. He never used to give way to paroxysms of

passion; he could not master so desperate a thing as himself now.

Jonson backed nearer to the door; but a dogged obstinacy crept into his eyes, and he took his stand with the stubborn courage of a mastiff.

"Mr. Tyrrol, mind you, it aren't so safe to swindle a man like me out of his earnings," he said. "I have your own hand-note for to prove that I'm your creditor for that there sum, besides sundries, which I earned for spyin' out other stories and guarding halls, and so on. I'll show them notes in any law court, and get my money; and it aren't a nice debt for a honourable to own to. I'll do it, as sure as my name's Simon Jonson, if you don't fork over neat and civil."

Jonson's voice was thin and trembling with rage; but he said all this without wincing, and glared at his master.

"Wretch!" shouted Tyrrol, "what am I to pay you for? For drinking yourself into a deaf and blind post, and ruining my whole scheme? You are twenty times over-paid for all you have done."

"Ten pounds won't pay me," retorted Jonson, pulling out his dirty pocket-book, and excitedly whirling over the leaves, until he came to a slip of paper, pinned on:

"Item. Story of the Opal Ring. Ten guineas.
P. Tyrrol."

"That's every farthing your honour has ever given me. I won't be chiselled out of the two hundred guineas."

"Be off, I say," reiterated Tyrrol, fairly carried away by passion, "and never let me see you again." Jonson grew livid with rage and consternation. He came back into the room, and gesticulated fiercely in his master's face:

"I'm dismissed, am I, from my place? I'm defied, am I? I'm to be robbed, am I? Look out, Mister Tyrrol; it aren't done yet, and as sure as my name is—"

Like a tiger Tyrrol sprang upon him, hurled him on the floor, and savagely kicked him.

The carpet was soft, and the Honourable Peregrine wore velvet slippers; but the kick which was on Jonson's face, so he rose and slunk out of the room, was one to be remembered when one walked through wood-paths alone and at night.

Tyrrol took no heed of it. He was tearing his nails with his teeth and quivering in his passion at a distant window, as Jonson shut the door and sneaked off to gather his effects together.

It was this very morning that Sir Maurice said to his little daughter, at the breakfast table:

"So your foolish freak of falling into the river is likely to cost Lord Grantham his life, I hear!"

Gerry raised her startled eyes, and gazed at her father very earnestly indeed.

"Dr. Marks told me yesterday," proceeded Sir Maurice, coldly, "that he showed all the symptoms of brain fever. His sister, Lady Jernyngham, was telegraphed to London for, and I suppose she arrived last night. It is all your fault, Geraldine."

Sir Maurice, having slipped his table-napkin into its silver ring, rose and sauntered out of the room.

Stephanie, coming in some time afterwards, to water Miss Gerry's gold-fish, found her little mistress with her curly King Charles's spaniel clasped tight in her arms, as if it were the only friend she had left in the world, and her tears saturating his silken ears.

"My dear mademoiselle!" ejaculated the sprightly maid; "you weep! Can I do anything? Is it that you have heard sad news of mademoiselle, the bishop's niece?"

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" sighed Gerry, in the faintest voice; "he's going to die! Poor—dear—old—oh!" and another burst of weeping expressed the rest.

"Ah, poor dog! who has harmed thee?" cried Stephanie, running to take the pet out of Gerry's arms, and examine it.

"No, no; it's not Violante at all! It's poor Viscount Grantham!—oh, dear! and he saved me from drowning—oh!"

Sir Maurice, passing the door, was arrested by the sob of his daughter and the stream of endearing consolations of the maid, and entered.

"What now, Geraldine?" he demanded, hastily.

Gerry hung her head, and a burning blush overspread her tear-bedewed cheeks. She twisted the tassel of her morning-robe into an inextricable knot.

"I insist upon hearing what is the matter," said Sir Maurice, somewhat seriously. "Where is your brother?"

"Sir," murmured Stephanie, with a wonderful courtesy; "Mr. Peregrine has not been here. It is that Mademoiselle Geraldine has heard that which has grieved her tender heart."

"Ah!" exclaimed Sir Maurice, dryly; "perhaps you can explain now, Geraldine. I insist upon understanding why you are in tears."

"Because," faltered Gerry, her poor little eyes filling up again, "because the vi-viscount, is going

to die, and I haven't even thanked him for saving my life, and—and—"

Here the sweetest storm of self-reproach rained from Gerry's eyes, and she couldn't finish.

Sir Maurice tried hard to remain frigid. He couldn't. Well, stolid. No, he couldn't even do that. He was forced to look just what he felt—delighted.

He never was so pleased in his life before.

"My dear," he said, quite gently, "we shall drive over to Rathdowney this morning, and call on Lady Jernyngham. You will then have an opportunity both of hearing how Lord Grantham is and of testifying your gratitude."

After having delivered his order, this blessed old father walked out again, and Gerry could have kissed that part of the carpet where he stood.

Stephanie, however, dragged her away to attire her in a wonderful toilette, and turned her out the most resistless fairy that ever danced on green.

Rathdowney was a nice old castle, set in a park of snow, with black railings running round a vast enclosure, which in summer was called "the grounds;" and there was a very pretty new set of rooms, which had been set forth daintily for a certain pretty bird, which was very hard to cage.

After Sir Maurice and his daughter had been seated in the viscount's drawing-room some time, Lady Jernyngham entered.

She was a portly matron, older than Grantham, and sufficiently like him to bring back a queer memory of the tender brown eyes which had looked upon Gerry in his half-drowned trance.

Lady Jernyngham and Sir Maurice plunged into a most engrossing conversation with each other, while Gerry little bright eyes gazed at the fire.

Would papa never have done with expressing his thanks to Lady Jernyngham's gallant brother, and ask whether he was dead or alive?

At last it comes.

"Has the viscount suffered any inconvenience from his exposure?" asks papa, as innocently as if he had never heard what Dr. Marks said yesterday.

"Oh, yes, indeed!" exclaimed the lady, with a good deal of surprise in her tone; "dear me, I thought you would have heard! I was telegraphed for yesterday, and came posting down, by the midnight train, to nurse the poor, dear fellow. His medical attendant was afraid of brain fever; but, thanks be to Providence, he seems much better to-day."

"Oh, dear me!" cried Sir Maurice, in polite dismay; "how very sad! My daughter insisted on coming over to-day (though she has been ill herself) to thank her brave deliverer in person; never dreaming—dear, dear, how very shocking!"

Lady Jernyngham was watching the flying changes on Gerry's face. It was indeed an entrancing study.

"Is there any—any danger?" breathed the darling, just when the lady was trying to keep from going over and kissing her.

That did it. Over bounced the portly dame, and deposited a hearty kiss on each crimson cheek.

"You're a handsome little monkey!" she muttered, ecstatically, "though you are a fine little chit to use John so. You are sorry, however, yes, you are, you darling!"

"Yes, indeed I am!" whimpered Gerry, planting her blazing face upon Lady Jernyngham's Mechlin pompadour; "and please tell him that I never meant—meant him to give me up."

She whispered it with a rush of confidence in his sister, who squeezed her against her bosom with two aristocratically long and strong arms.

"Now, you precious, you shall walk into his room, and say that pretty little speech to him yourself—shan't she, Sir Maurice?" turning to that self-complacent personage. "She'll do him more good than all Marks's bottles. Come, dearie."

And she lugged off the fluttered Gerry, heedless of her eager questions and nervous tremors.

But when Gerry stood just inside the door of a darkened apartment, with an immense tapestry-curtained bed in it, and met the restless eyes of old Lord Grantham, staring at her with delighted incredulity, she forgot how queer it was to see a man wrapped up in bed-clothes instead of in broadcloth; she forgot how old Lord Grantham really was, and what a bore he used to be, and I'm afraid she even forgot how utterly heart-broken she was about her knight of the golden hair.

She tripped forward with both hands outstretched, with large eyes brimming over with tears, and coral lips quivering grievously, and when she had reached the bedside she seized the hot hands that were ready for her and began to sob and cry.

"Don't—don't, Miss Gerry," murmured Lord Grantham, as tenderly as anybody could have said it; "what are you crying for?"

"Dear—dearest Grantham," gurgled the penitent, spasmodically; "can you ever forgive me?"

"For what, you little girle?" asked the invalid, with a break in his own voice.

"I was so silly—so crazy ever to think anybody equal to you."

"My darling!" interrupted the viscount, with very unnecessary emphasis on the possessive pronoun.

"And you have got your death taking me out of the river?" finished Gerry, laying her face upon the pillow beside—would you believe it?—the pepper-and-salt moustache of Lord Grantham.

"You little angel!" exclaimed the invalid, with extraordinary energy for a dying man; "do you care for me at all, then?"

"Yes, indeed—and oh—and oh, ever so much!" wailed Gerry; "and—only that you're worlds too good."

"For what, darling love?"

"To please get better, and marry me!"

There now, 'twas out, and there was no chance—not the smallest chink of one—for the knight of the golden hair.

Viscount Grantham flung his arms round her, and kissed her a dozen times. Gerry did not notice that the moustache was grizzled—she liked the kisses, I verily believe, for she returned the last of them in coin very much of the same currency.

"I'd live for ever to win such a darling little wife!" observed the viscount, ignoring the fact that he had already lived too long; "and I hope she'll never, never rue her generosity."

"It is you who are generous," said Beauty, quite pleased with her boast, "to thus forget my folly and take me back after all."

"Just tell me this," whispered her lover, very softly, after a while; "did you try to escape poor old Grantham when you went to the middle of the plant-bridge?"

Gerry started up and gazed in horror at him, then clung to him closer than before.

"No, indeed I did not," she shuddered; "I hope you never believed that of me. I was troubled, and not thinking what I was doing, but I was never that wicked—no, not for a moment. I was going to cross the bridge and ask the Keythorpes to send me home, but I did not see very well, I suppose, for my foot went down, and I was in the cold, black water before I knew what had happened. Ugh!"

She clung closer than ever to her brave old Grantham; many thoughts were in her little heart; what a darling he would think her when, in after-days, he would listen to her praises of him for that perilous hour.

"Are you dangerously ill?" asked Gerry, wistfully.

"I thought I was, half an hour ago," smiled her lover, contentedly; "but I've had a drink of the elixir of life since then. I'll be over it before a week, I'll lay my best hunter on it! Hallo, here's Agnes! Kiss me once more, my own little Gerry."

Which Gerry did, and that wicked Lady Jernyngham pretended not to know it.

She was nicer than ever to Geraldine; took her in her arms without the least apparent cause, and beamed down upon her brother a perfect shower of smiles.

Whether she had been in the room, or out of the room, during Gerry's confessions, she never would be brought to say.

I believe, myself, that the unprincipled woman was sitting on a hall chair all the time.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Oh, what may man within him hide,
Though angel on the outward side!

Shakespeare.

Two gray stone houses, facing each other, a garden plat between; cliffs on cliffs behind, and the wide, gray sea slipping over the velvet turf to their feet.

Here lived the fugitive and her guardian. The houses were ancient; the walls were weather-worn, and the tough old ivy clung to the tiles and waved over the chimney tops.

The garden plat was putting forth tiny bannerets of green; the lily buds were forming; the hardy crocuses already presented his painted cups, and the *spiræula* snowdrop waved her diaphanous bells in every harsh breath of February.

A lady walked in the garden, and her feet lingered lovingly among the spring flowers, while her eyes went over the waves, as fathomless as they.

In her royal-blue velvet, her ermine mantle, and sheney lace scarf about her wonderful tresses, Miss Thounval walked a being of loveliness and majesty, only fairer and more fragile than before.

What was the secret of that light which shone so softly from her eyes of ethereal blue? What was it that painted that crimson flush, tender and ornate, upon her snow-pure cheek? What was it that threaded the curving lashes with the diamond-tear?

'Twas love, who, with magic hand, overthrows the

stoutest ramparts, and throws his spell upon the loftiest heights.

She leaned upon the arm of Gretchen, and an old lady, muffled in a tartan cloak, strolled after them—Mrs. Bell, Lord Edgar Berney's housekeeper, who matroned the household.

Miss Thouvenal's asylum was carefully chosen; it was on one of the small islands north of Scotland, and was several miles from the small fishing-town by land. By water you could cross a wide bay of two miles or so; but in stormy weather this was not very practicable. They had no neighbours, and were as completely swallowed up from the ken of their enemies as if they had put the globe between them.

Lord Berney had been a faithful guardian, and as day by day he was admitted to her presence he adored her more passionately at every interview, even when he became more guarded in the expression of his feelings, for fear of distressing her.

Upon hearing the contents of the bishop's letter to Berney, Miss Thouvenal had felt keen disappointment but not alarm.

Lord Berney had been careful to read only those parts which spoke of a sudden departure on business; and indeed even he had not suffered himself to feel alarmed at the tone of the letter.

It was guarded in its expressions—well, that was only prudent—there was an indefinable air of sadness in it—that also was natural. Was not the bishop a man of keen affections? Had he not adored this unfortunate lady, and were not her griefs weighing on his mind?

Ermengarde had said so very often when she spoke of his kindness to her.

She was looking for him to join them every day now; more than a month had passed since they fled from Bishopstowe; surely her dear benefactor was at liberty from his imperative business to join them now.

"That debt that he mentioned," she would sigh; "surely that would not detain him all this time; could it, Gretchen?"

Gretchen secretly fretted, but said nothing.

Well, they were promenading the budding walks, when Miss Thouvenal pointed over the rocks to the bit of dancing sea.

"There comes Wade from the town," she exclaimed; "and I really think there is some one with him. What if he should be my dear bishop?"

"Ah, that would be joy indeed, madame," answered Gretchen, shading her eyes with her hand, and peering anxiously at the dancing boat.

An angle of the cliffs hid it.

Wade soon appeared, coming up the path—alone. He saw the ladies, bowed hurriedly, and went into Lord Berney's house.

They continued their walk among the crocuses.

In a few minutes his lordship emerged from his house, and entered the garden.

There was a hesitation, an excitement in his manner never seen there before. His eyes avoided Miss Thouvenal's glance when he addressed her.

Gretchen noticed this and bit her lip. Without knowing why, she gave him a warning glance, and began to feel miserable when she perceived how instantly he took it and composed himself.

"I have had a letter from Bishopstowe," said he; "shall we enter the house, madame, and read the contents?"

"Yes, yes. Is it from Bishop Thouvenal?"

"No doubt," he muttered, and, hastily offering her his arm, he conducted her into her own house.

As she crossed the threshold, looking back she saw Wade walking down again to the beach.

Lord Berney was looking down at her with a strange expression; it spoke of worship, of terror, of consternation.

Luckily she did not see it; she was as yet serene and unsuspecting.

Gretchen seated her lady, and began to remove her white lace scarf; Gretchen's fingers trembled so that she was fain to desist.

"Tell your news," she muttered, in a guttural tone.

"This is a letter for my steward, containing an enclosure. Bell informs me that Bishop Thouvenal has been away for a time."

"Ah, he has returned now, I trust," breathed Ermengarde; "and is coming to his poor niece again."

It was her dearest wish, to be with him again. Absence from him had shown her how her heart clung to that grand, yet mysterious soul. She loved to speak of him as her "uncle," and to fancy him with her here, in this wild, sweet spot.

Lord Berney glanced over his steward's letter, although he knew too well what was there.

"No, madame, he has not returned. He has been abroad."

"Eh? Abroad!" ejaculated the lady. "Where, then, my friend?"

"He has been in Germany, dear madame."

"The enclosure—is it from my lord bishop?" asked the lady, in a sinking voice.

"No, madame."

"Heavens! you are afraid to speak to me! From whom, then, is it?"

"From one who has been faithful to you, and who desires to see you again."

Lord Berney handed her the sealed letter, and turned away.

Miss Thouvenal quickly opened it, and read the few words within. She handed the open sheet to her maid, with a look of bewilderment.

"Carlstadt is coming here!" she exclaimed.

Gretchen read these words in German:

"GRACIOUS MADAME,—I return to you, bearing ill-tidings from Germany. Fear nothing for yourself; all search for the baroness is over, and you are safe."

"Your faithful servant."

"HANS CARLSTADT."

"Madame, be calm," said Gretchen, still attempting to keep up the semblance of composure. "He says you are safe, and what matters all the rest?"

"Peace, Gretchen!" cried Miss Thouvenal. "I have fears that I cannot account for—worse than the fear of my own death. My lord, you do not speak! and Gretchen, you who are ever so brave—you tremble! What is this that you are hiding from me?"

"Patience for a moment, dear lady," answered Lord Berney, striving to calm her; "Carlstadt will be here immediately. Wade did not bring him until you should be in a measure prepared for his visit. Here he comes."

Wade passed the window, leading in a little thin, wiry old man, with a long white beard, and richly dressed.

The ex-chamberlain of the house of —, though now in hiding and disgrace for his complicity in the robbery of the murdered princess's jewels, still retained his courtly mien and grave simplicity of glance.

He entered the chamber, announced by Wade, and prostrated himself at the feet of Miss Thouvenal.

She gave him her hand to kiss, and gazed at him with the deepest solitude.

"How have you found me, my friend?" she exclaimed. "Up, Carlstadt, and explain what new calamity has befallen us."

"Madame, it is for your ear alone," he returned, in his native tongue.

"No, no—do not go, my lord!" cried the terrified lady, with an agonised look at him; "I can trust these two, Carlstadt, and so must you."

"I have to tell you evil tidings of one who was called Bishop Jerome Thouvenal."

"My benefactor! Ah, Herr Carlstadt, you strike deep! I love the bishop much."

"Madame," returned Carlstadt, with lowered eyes, "if it were possible, I would conceal this from you. It is too painful."

"I must hear it. But, mind you, I love Bishop Thouvenal so much that I will risk anything and everything to save him from danger. Good Carlstadt, I call him my uncle, I love him so! Now tell me all, and dare to conceal nothing, thinking to prevent me from interfering."

Carlstadt bowed; a deeper gray settled on his countenance as she spoke thus. He shuddered.

"Bishop Jerome Thouvenal was obliged to go to Brünn immediately after your flight from Bishopstowe. The diamond collar had been discovered with him."

"Ah!" gasped Ermengarde; "go on."

"An opal ring was also discovered with him, which had belonged to His Royal Highness Prince F—. It identified him with a man who twenty years ago was called—Blaise."

"What? That terrible robber!" shrieked Ermengarde. "Impossible! My benefactor was an angel of goodness. Oh, fatal mistake!"

"Bishop Thouvenal confessed that he was that man. He confessed that he had stolen the diamond collar while he was that man. He confessed that he had assisted the Baroness Eberstein to steal it a second time. He proved that Baroness Eberstein was dead, by showing them a photograph of her, which he had obtained from Gretchen. He pleaded guilty to the crime they charged you with. He was taken to Brünn after these confessions; was tried, was condemned, and—"

Carlstadt paused. Terror hung livid upon his lips; grief choked further utterance.

The lady grasped his sleeve with one convulsive hand; the other wildly motioned him to proceed.

Gretchen stood by, a horrified statue; Lord Berney covered his eyes.

"Was condemned—and is dead!" groaned Carlstadt, in a lamentable voice.

(To be continued.)

THE population inhabiting the German Alps are busy preparing for the event of a victorious peace,

or at least for the capture of Paris. They are piling up wood on all the prominent heights for fires to be lighted, to such an extent that the whole range of hills will be set ablaze as soon as the expected event takes place, to proclaim the glorious tidings to three kingdoms at once.

LADY JULIETTE'S SECRET.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Grand Court," "The Rose of Kemdale," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXV.

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure. Tennyson.

"Yes, Mr. Clenham," said the voice of Nancy Symes, "this box contains treasure to the value of one hundred thousand pounds, and it shall all be devoted to the cause of God. It shall feed the hungry and clothe the naked; it shall endow schools and build churches; it shall provide hospitals for the sick. The gold shall be spent, and then the jewels shall be sold, and the proceeds devoted to the same purpose; and now that you have followed me and learnt my secret, I may take you partly into my confidence. In fact, so far as the money goes, you shall direct me entirely how it is to be spent. You want two hundred pounds now for the hospital; take more, take away five hundred. Use the extra three hundred for purchasing comforts and necessities for the families of the sick. You might allow twelve or fourteen shillings a week to each family where the father is out of employ; then we might purchase warm clothing and numbers of other things. Will you not help yourself? Then let me count the money out to you. These divisions are full of sovereigns."

The curate waved his hand towards Nancy Symes. The expression on his face cut poor Maria Piper to the heart. It showed her at once how hopeless it was to deceive herself with the idea that she could ever win his love. Admiration, nay, adoration looked out of his eyes. She saw that his whole heart was given to Nancy Symes, the carpenter's mysterious niece—and she, how beautiful she was, and how spiritual the expression of her pale, calm countenance!

Then the curate spoke:

"Nancy, Nancy," he said, "how can I take this money unless I know to whom it belongs of right? Nay, do not think that I doubt you. I know that you believe you have a right to use it, but unless I understand the whole history, I will not touch a single farthing!"

Nancy looked down upon the treasure, and a peculiar smile flitted over her face.

"Then I must tell you my whole history," she said.

"But it is frightful for you to remain out in this fog!" cried the curate, "and kneeling on this sodden grass. Let us return the treasure-box to its hiding-place. Take away, if you like, the five hundred pounds, and you can tell me the story under cover at the hospital."

Nancy immediately proceeded to obey the directions of the curate. She filled the bag which lay at her side with five hundred pounds; then she and the curate between them fastened up the lids and springs, and rolled the coffer into the cavity under the tower. Then the stone with the iron ring was fitted in, and the curate spoke to Nancy:

"I must carry the bag," he said, "for it is far too heavy for you."

Again that strange smile passed over Nancy's face.

"You fear to pollute your hands, Mr. Clenham," she said, "with touching what you may consider stolen property. Make your mind easy. This treasure belonged to the Earl of Castleton, and was left in his will to his only child, Juliette Cadette. After his death it was stolen; then it was recovered from the thief and buried here."

"But, but," cried the curate, in a tone of great excitement, "in that case is the robbery more complete than ever. The orphan ward of Colonel Philbertson, a creature as beautiful, pious, self-devoted as yourself, Lady Juliette Cadette, is the rightful owner of this fortune!"

"Yes, Lady Juliette Cadette is indeed the rightful owner of this fortune," repeated Nancy, "but she has resolved to devote it to such service rather than to expend it upon the pomps and vanities of this wicked world."

"Then she knows of its existence?" cried the curate. "She has commissioned you—"

He broke off, looking at Nancy with widely opened eyes, his good, noble face lit up with wild astonishment.

"I act with the full concurrence of Lady Juliette Cadette," said Nancy.

"But, Nancy, although I believe you trust you—may, love you as much as it is possible for man to love woman, still I cannot take and use this money until I have seen Lady Juliette herself, and received a commission, signed by her own hand, empowering me to spend this treasure in works of charity and mercy."

"Until you have seen Lady Juliette herself," answered Nancy, still with that peculiar smile. "You shall see her soon, Mr. Clenham, and hear from her own lips what her wishes are. Meanwhile, you will carry the bag and I will take the lantern."

The curate lifted the bag, Nancy carried the lantern, and the two walked away together. Maria Piper, shivering in the fog, out of heart, out of hope, turned her downcast face in the direction of those two, and followed noiselessly in their foot-steps. On, on, across the wet grass, and now out into a closely planted lane, which led by a short cut into Laylands. As she trod over the sodden leaves her heart misgave her; it was no marvel if she misjudged both the curate and Nancy Symes.

"She pretends to be a saint and is all the while a sinner," said poor little Maria, to herself. "She has managed to steal this great treasure, and, worse, she has managed to steal the heart of yonder saint. She has perverted his judgment; she has poisoned his peace; she has deceived him by pretending to work in the cause of Heaven; she bribes him with gold; but, knowing him to be so pure and good, she professes that the gold is to be spent in the service of the poor, the blind, the sick, the naked, and the miserable. Ah! she will dazzle his eyes and his judgment with those flashing gems which are not hers to bestow! By degrees, and step by step, he will be led, that hitherto holy and self-denying Arthur Clenham, to the commission of robbery. At last he will appropriate the wealth to himself, and will marry Nancy Symes. Oh, my idol is fallen, is fallen! But I must not wait and lament over the ruins; no, my duty calls me elsewhere. I shall not stay and nurse the sick at Laylands! No! I must hasten on to London; I must seek Lady Juliette; I must tell her how she has been robbed by this terrible girl and her uncle, the carpenter. I will not blame Mr. Clenham. No, he is so far only a victim, not a participator in the crime. But he shall not marry Nancy Symes, and fatten on the wealth of yonder innocent orphan. No; he shall not, he shall not, he shall not!" and poor Maria clenched her little white teeth. Her chest was convulsed by a storm of sobs. "I will save him," continued the little love-sick maiden, "save him from the deceitful snares of yonder temptress. Oh, she is enticing him along the flowery path that leadeth to destruction! She is like Delilah, and he is Samson. He will be shorn of his strength, his uprightness; he will become a thief, and he will marry Nancy Symes, and yet not, not if I can get to London in time to prevent them. I have enough money for a railway ticket, a return ticket, and five shillings over. To-night I must get on to Laylands as though nothing had happened. I must ask to see Mr. Clenham, and tell him—what can I tell him? No, I must tell no truths; I must say that I lost my way, which is true, and I must beg for shelter for the night, and state that I am going to London by the early train to-morrow. At home they will wonder very much, of course, when they find that, after leaving a note stating that I am gone to nurse the sick, I have slept one night at the hospital and have then gone on to London. They will think that I am mad, of course. Well, let them, let them! Let anybody think anything he likes about me."

Poor little Maria was desperate. She honestly believed she was doing all that was right. We know, too, for our own part, that the curate and Nancy Symes honestly believed that they were doing right. Poor Nancy was no more Delilah than little innocent, energetic, impulsive Maria was Jezebel. Maria, meanwhile, felt the cold strike to her very vitals. She shivered one moment and burned the next; her head ached, and her throat was inflamed—she was just in the state, excited, exhausted, overwrought, when the demon of fever would find her an easy prey.

And now they approached Laylands; in front, the curate and the carpenter's niece, the shivering little Maria in the rear. Maria was guided by their foot-steps and voices, but they, wrapped up in each other, heard not her timid steps behind. And now the great wooden gate of the avenue swung back on its hinges, and the curate held it back for Nancy to pass in. Maria hastened her steps, and just as the curate was about to close the gate, she laid her trembling fingers on the topmost rail.

"Oh, if you please, Mr. Clenham," she said, "I have lost my way. I thought it was you, I knew your voice," and though these words were strictly true in themselves, poor Maria felt that she was guilty of some portion of deceit in allowing the curate to suppose that she had only just overtaken him.

He, all unsuspecting, clear in conscience, and upright as we know him to be, flinched not from the witnessing of Maria Piper. He was only amazed to find the doctor's daughter standing, at twelve o'clock at night, in such a thick fog, two miles away from home.

"My dear young lady," he cried, "I am quite distressed to see you in such a condition. I will walk home with you, though."

"Thanks—I don't want to go home," she answered.

And yet how pitilessly sweet that walk of two miles would have been, leaning on the curate's arm and listening to his voice. The fog, and the cold, and the burning pain in her own poor throat would all have been forgotten by the devoted Maria. However, she told herself that she had a higher duty to perform than to indulge in her own hopeless love-dreams. Was not Nancy Symes Delilah, a false-voiced siren who, under the guise of a saint of charity, was committing wholesale robbery, and leading Arthur Clenham towards the pit of destruction? She must go up to London; she must see Lady Juliette and the colonel; she must tell them that Nancy Symes and her uncle, the carpenter, had stolen the treasure of the Castletons years ago, and that now they were deluding the curate by pretending to be charitable, when all the while—

Here her thoughts went off into a chaos of confusion. A little sober reflection might have taught Maria that it was not likely that Nancy Symes, being possessed of such great treasure, however unjustly, would have satisfied her ambition merely by marrying the humble curate of Allonby. A deceitful, wily enchantress would have flown at higher game.

"I do not want to go home to-night," faltered Maria, "because I am going to London to-morrow."

"London!" echoed the curate. "But, Miss Piper, you would be afraid to sleep here in a fever hospital."

"I am as courageous as—as Miss Symes," faltered Maria, "or any other good person who is nursing the sick at Laylands, and, indeed, Mr. Clenham, I had intended to offer my services to you as hospital nurse only that I am called away to London, and I should be more than grateful if you would give me shelter for to-night; a sofa, a stretcher-bed—anything would do for me."

"The best the house affords is quite at your service," replied the curate, "and since you are not afraid, and fear is the primary cause of danger, perhaps we might find a room for you on the first floor."

"On the ground floor," cried Nancy Symes, who had hitherto stood silent by the side of the curate. "There is a little room on the ground floor which might be fitted up for Miss Piper, and I will arrange it myself."

It was as much as Maria could do to say politely to Nancy, "Thank you."

Then the three walked together under the thickly planted avenue.

"He offers no explanation," thought Maria, to herself, "for being out so late alone with Nancy Symes. I don't see why this creature is to go on being reckoned a saint, when, in reality, she is a thief, and, perhaps, worse."

Poor little Maria was almost choking with passionate resentment. They reached the door of Laylands and entered the house. Everything was clean and in perfect order. A motherly looking woman, in a white cap and apron, ushered Miss Piper, Nancy, and the curate into a plain parlour, covered with cocoanut matting, where there were very few tables and chairs, and those only of polished deal. Yet everything shone with cleanliness, and a warm fire was leaping up the chimney.

"We have been partially successful," said the curate, addressing the hospital nurse, "and I have every reason to believe that in a few days we shall have much larger funds at our disposal. Meanwhile, will you not get some chocolate and bread and butter for these ladies? or, perhaps, they would like a glass of wine, or a slice of cake?"

Maria indignantly tossed her head when the curate spoke of her and Nancy Symes together as "these ladies." At least her good papa was an honest doctor, and not a thieving carpenter.

She refused to touch chocolate, cake, bread and butter, or wine. She drew off her waterproof and hood, sat before the fire, and strove to warm her chilled limbs. Her little pale face was flushed, her small gray eyes sparkled, her breathing was laboured, and her throat burned. The experienced nurse looked at her and shook her head.

"Don't you feel well, miss?" she asked.

"I shall be well to-morrow," returned Maria, impatiently.

Her eager wishes were already flying along the line of rail towards London—busy, smoky, gorgeous, gay, and wicked London—which the young country lady had never seen, for Allonby village lies more

than a hundred miles from town, and the poor, good doctor had no money to spare to his children for excursions or travelling.

"I shall be better to-morrow," repeated Maria.

The curate neither expressed nor did he feel any great curiosity as to the reason why Miss Piper was out so late on such a terrible night of winter's fog and cold. He knew that Maria was very good in visiting the poor, and he supposed that in returning from some such errand she had lost her way.

The curate now took his leave of the hospital for the night. He shook hands with Miss Piper; that of Nancy Symes he held within his own for several seconds, and then he went away.

"Please to show me my room," cried Miss Piper, a little impatiently.

"If you will come this way," said Nancy Symes, speaking very humbly, "I will show you a nice room, where you may sleep comfortably."

Maria then followed Nancy.

The room was on the ground floor at the end of the passage. It was neat and comfortable, though very plainly furnished. Poor Maria sat down upon the little bed, and fixed her small, angry eyes on the pale, beautiful face of the carpenter's niece. Once alone with her rival, the doctor's daughter could not refrain from speaking out at least some of the jealous feelings that were surging in her outraged little heart.

"You choose a strange time for walking, Miss Symes," said Maria, sharply. "Twelve o'clock at night, and with that handsome curate! I wonder you are not quite afraid of being talked about! I should be, I know; and certainly I am more in his rank than you are. Although papa is only a poor doctor, he is still a gentleman, and I—I hope I am a lady!"

The carpenter's niece opened her large eyes in astonishment. Nancy was one of those exalted beings who are slow to perceive the weaknesses and passions of humanity, simply because they do not share them. For other people's trials and troubles Nancy had the warmest sympathies, but of their loves, their hates, their jealousies she had no comprehension. The acrimony, then, in Maria's tones amazed her. Miss Maria Piper, whom she knew to be such a good, self-sacrificing young lady, such an amiable sister, such an obedient daughter, such a friend to the poor, and yet there she sat, fury in her eyes, scorn on her lip, looking, ay, and feeling too, as though she would have liked to annihilate Nancy with a glance.

"I have never thought about it, Miss Piper," said Nancy, humbly, "not in that way, I mean, about people speaking evil things of me and of Mr. Clenham. I feel sure that either he or I would rather die than do what was wrong in the sight of Heaven, and that, I suppose, is the reason it has never struck us that folks might speak evilly of us. But it will be better to be more careful for the future, and I thank you very much, Miss Piper, for your advice."

"You need not thank me," cried Maria, more sharply than before. "It can't matter a fig to me whether you are talked about or not; it is no concern of mine. But as for thinking that people are to be taken in by all that cant and religious talk, it is most absurd. I wonder you are not quite ashamed of being such a hypocrite."

Nancy's large eyes opened still wider, but not a flash of anger sparkled in them.

"I hope I am not a hypocrite," she said, earnestly, "still we all know that the heart is deceitful above all things, and—"

"Oh, stop! stop! stop!" cried Maria, starting to her feet, and pacing the room in a fury. "All that cant makes me ill! I cannot endure it! It is dreadful! I wonder you are not ashamed, I really do."

Not a suspicion had crossed the mind of Nancy that Miss Piper had seen the box of treasures opened at the ruins, therefore she was completely in the dark how to account for this accusation and anger and scorn. She looked at her with ever-increasing astonishment.

"What have I done, Miss Piper?" she asked. "If I have walked with the curate late at night, and that is imprudent, and I promise and resolve never to do it again, does that condemn me to such contempt?"

"I know I have a very thorough contempt for you," returned Maria. "I consider you one of the greatest hypocrites, one of the most wicked persons in the world. Now please to leave me, for I wish to go to sleep; and don't expect me to be civil to you, Miss Nancy Symes, and to join in chorus with all the people who can't see your deceitful ways."

Nancy Symes cast down her eyes and blushed. She knew that she did not deserve such severe accusations, but she was so intensely religious, she had so accustomed herself to consider that everything that happened occurred solely by the will of Heaven, that she regarded the angry bitterness as a scourge for some fault which she had committed.

"Good-night, Miss Piper," she said, meekly. "I hope you will sleep well."

Then Nancy Symes passed out of the room, and

Maria was left alone. She undressed, extinguished the light, and crept into bed; but when the doctor's little daughter awoke it was not to consciousness. Raging fever came on during the night, and for many days Maria suffered an intensity of torture. Tormented by thirst, she seemed to hang, tied by the feet, from the boughs of a vividly green tree; below her flowed a lake whose pellucid waters mocked her vision but ever eluded her touch. Many other strange and painful fancies possessed her, and when, at the end of a fortnight, she recovered consciousness, it was to find herself lying weak and spent upon her little bed in the hospital at Laylands. Bending over her was the beautiful face of Nancy Symes, looking at her with pitiful eyes as of an angel.

Maria turned her face to the wall and moaned. "I have been nursed by a thief!" she sobbed inwardly. "I owe my life to a thief!"

Then she resolved within herself that she would make haste and get well, that she might hurry up to London and tell all her story to Lady Juliette and the Philbertsons.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

I would I were
So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,
To stand apart, and to adore,
Gazing on thee for evermore,
Serene, imperial Eleanor!

Tennyson.

THE fortnight that poor Maria Piper had lain so ill at Laylands had been a momentous time for Eugene Fernandez. His office of secretary and companion to Sir Guildford Owen was almost a sinecure—the private correspondence now was by no means large—he became daily more like a confidential friend than a mere hired dependant of the baronet, and every day saw him in the house at Hyde Park, the lordly mansion where dwelt Lady Juliette Cadette. Morning after morning she sat for him in her winter dress of rich blue velvet trimmed with ermine. Diamonds glittered in her ears, a diamond cross hung suspended by a gold chain from her throat. It was the wish of Mrs. Philbertson and the colonel that their beautiful ward should look as peerlessly lovely and as nobly aristocratic as ever was royal princess. The dress was not an evening costume. Her rich dark hair was artistically arranged in the front, while long curling tresses rested on her shoulders. This picture was to adorn the walls of the Academy the ensuing spring.

Fernandez, then, toiled for fame while he toiled for love, of the latter he drank in deep draughts while watching the glorious beauty of the wife he had married and dared not claim. They conversed—those two enthusiastic young creatures, whom fate had thrown so strangely in one another's way, and it was singular how many bonds of sympathy seemed to exist between them.

Fernandez told something of his history to Juliette, and Juliette confided many of her aspirations to Fernandez. She began to look at him pityingly, nay, we had almost said, tenderly, as the days wore on. She saw the light of genius flashing in his eyes; she understood that the lofty spirit, "cribbled, cabined, confined" by cruel circumstance, was a soul fitted by nature more to rule than to obey, and yet hitherto subservience had been his lot on earth.

It was a marvel that evil had not sprung up in Fernandez, considering the soil in which his lot had been cast, and wherein he had grown from childhood to manhood. Embittered, impatient he may have been, he was; but he had not lost his love for humankind, his faith in Heaven, his reverence for purity and goodness. Gentle Juliette wept when she heard the story of his being abandoned, fever-stricken and penniless, in the distant city of Constantinople.

"Your ladyship should not weep," cried Fernandez, "your tears blind me, madden me, make me forget my oath, and my duty—"

Juliette looked up at him astonished, almost terrified, with the expression of a startled deer in her large eyes.

"Your oath, Mr. Fernandez!" she echoed.

At that moment there sounded a footstep in the adjoining apartment, which was a sort of winter conservatory filled with exotic flowers, and then, across the violet velvet carpet, there walked the handsome, stately Lord Crossby. The manly beauty of this young nobleman, contrasted with the Spanish type of that of Fernandez, was as the glory and glitter of a blue June day, compared with the solemn yet sweet and brilliant majesty of a southern moonlight night.

Lord Crossby's hair was fair and curling, his large eyes were blue as the heavens, his features were perfectly moulded, his complexion fresh and fair, his teeth dazzlingly white, he was tall, and strongly knit, a splendid specimen of a stalwart Saxon. Fernandez, looking at him from under his own long, dark eyelashes, felt a pang at his jealous heart when the nobleman approached Lady Juliette, took her hand in his, and addressed her in a strain almost of endearment.

"Such a nuisance!" he cried, "that my father should have sent for me just at the very time when I most wished to be here, but I returned this morning, Juliette, and I lost no time in coming to see you. Ah! so you are having your portrait taken—how lovely, how beautiful!"

And then he turned round his gracious, handsome face to smile approval upon the still handsomer Spanish-looking artist.

Not a shadow of suspicion, not a thought of jealousy, crossed the mind of the frank, gay, young lord. The penniless beauty would surely be only too glad to accept him, with his title, his wealth, and his good looks. He had spoken to Colonel Philbertson, and he took all for granted—he considered the matter settled. He seated himself by her side, and entered into gay, light, desultory converse.

Fernandez, watching the changes which passed over the countenance of Juliette, felt his soul stirred almost to frenzy; she blushed, she smiled, she looked down, and the gay lord treated her as though she belonged to him—as though it were an accomplished fact. And this was his wife—great Heavens! this was Fernandez's wife—and he was compelled to stand there and to listen to such words as the following:

"Philbertson says he shall send this to the Academy, but I don't seem to relish the idea of allowing every popinjay to stare into those glorious blue eyes, and to comment on the ripeness of those lovely lips—only painted ones, of course, I quite comprehend that—but still, ha, ha, ha! I am a sort of fellow to feel jealous, or, at least, somewhat outraged at the idea. No; we won't send it to the Academy, Juliette, we will hang it in our private boudoir. I will make the artist's fortune; what's his name—Fernandez? Mr. Fernandez, I will give you an order to paint a companion portrait to that likeness—to wit, myself. Name your price—two hundred, three hundred—anything you like. You are a first-rate fellow, and you must allow me to shake hands with you, for you have painted my future wife so exquisitely."

Fernandez shrank from the proffered hand as though it had been a stinging serpent, but then, recollecting himself, perceiving that he was about to make a scene, he touched the white aristocratic fingers with his own, and managed to mutter something like thanks. The happy young lord knew nothing and perceived nothing. He returned to his seat by the side of Lady Juliette, probably thinking that the young painter was shy. So Fernandez had to go on painting while Lord Crossby made love to his own wife before his own eyes. He watched Juliette furtively, anxiously; he saw her blush, but he could not hear her low-toned replies. Was she accepting him as her future husband? Would she have two husbands? No, before that day he must go forward and tell her all. If she reproached him with breaking his oath, he would tell her that she was about to break the laws of her country, that she was about to become a bigamist—she, the spiritual, the angelic, the saintlike Juliette Cadette. His brush was between his fingers; he toyed with it, but did not use it. He watched those two. It was impossible, we repeat, for him to hear the low-toned replies which Juliette made to the wooing of Lord Crossby, but he could hear a great deal of the nobleman's conversation. From all that he could see there was no disposition on the part of Lord Crossby to accept a refusal, or abandon the idea of winning Juliette for his wife. Ever and anon his laugh rang loud and clear through the gorgeous, gilded drawing-room.

"But that's all nonsense," Fernandez heard him say. "Oh, yes, I have spoken to Philbertson. He will make it all right. Oh, yes, I will give you your own way in everything. Charity schools—you shall build them by the dozen, ha, ha, ha! But you will take an interest in something else after awhile, you will, upon my honour! Come into the conservatory, Lady Juliette."

At this moment the young nobleman caught the flashing dark eyes of the artist fastened upon him, and though the young nobleman was not particularly clever, shrewd, or penetrating, he was quite sensible enough to perceive that Fernandez was not studying his countenance merely from an artistic point of view.

"Come into the conservatory, if you please, Lady Juliette," he said.

And he offered his arm to her young ladyship. Juliette accepted it. Perhaps she was glad of an opportunity of escaping from the penetrating gaze of the impassioned Fernandez. Suffice it to say, in few words, that Juliette had read his secret.

He was left alone then in that splendid drawing-room, with its four great windows, its satin curtains, its gilded furniture, mirrors, and statuettes. He paced up and down the velvet carpet impatiently. All at once his eye was caught by an exquisite statuette of Diana; it was half hidden by a satin curtain. Now, desperately as he loved, and anxiously as he felt, Fernandez was so true a lover of art that

if anything remarkable struck his fancy in the shape of picture, statue, or natural landscape, he was always forced to pause, examine, admire, or criticise, as the case might be. He hastily, then, approached this Diana, for he wished to examine the modelling of the arm. It happened, then, that thus occupied he was quite hidden from the sight of any one who might happen to be in the room.

Glancing up suddenly after he had completed his study, he saw Mapleton glide stealthily in through a side door. How ugly he looked, how evil, how cunning, how common-place! Fernandez at once drew out pencil and paper and began to make a sketch of the head. Mapleton himself was busied in jotting down notes in a pocket-book; all unconscious, it seemed, of observation, he was not particular to smoothe his knotted brow, or to contort his wide mouth with false smiles; so Fernandez worked away at the head, and at the end of about ten minutes a grim, ugly, yet excellent likeness of the ex-tramp was in the possession of the young artist. Without exaggerating any trait, Fernandez contrived to make the evil face an advertisement for the evil nature within. Cunning looked out from the heavy eyelids, murder brooded on the low brow, ferocity and sensuality were seen on the leer of the ugly mouth and the setting of the heavy lower jaw. It astonished Fernandez that Mapleton should remain in the room where he had been painting, and where he must have expected to meet him, in fact, for lately he had taken every opportunity of avoiding him. He thrust the likeness into his pocket-book, and came out from behind the curtain.

Mapleton looked up at him coldly, grimly, savagely. He neither winced nor changed colour. Had he been watching him, had he seen him all the while while he believed himself hidden by the curtain? Anyhow, there was no surprise manifested on the part of Mapleton. He did not pretend to be courteous, for courtesy lay not in his line. He did not rise or bow; he only said, coldly:

"You seem to be prospering."

The tone was so insolent that Fernandez could not refrain from retorting:

"You seem to be prospering, also."

"I have something more than prosperity," returned Mapleton; "I have power. I have but to raise my finger, and all your prosperity would flow away from you. You will find it to your interest to be obedient and civil to me."

"I always meet civility with civility," returned Fernandez, "and insolence with insolence; that is my habit, Mr. Mapleton."

A cunning gleam sparkled for a moment in the deeply sunk eyes of the ex-tramp.

"Let us be friends," he said. "Let us strike up a bond of unity. Come with me to the theatre to-night, and afterwards I will give you an oyster supper. I will show you life in some of its peculiar phases. If you are a literary man, if you are a student of humanity, you should not shrink from watching life even of the lowest and humblest."

"I shrink from nothing humble," returned Fernandez. "But gilded vice is repugnant to me. I detest debauchery, drunkenness, and uproar; therefore, I decline your offer with thanks."

Mapleton laughed hoarsely, put his hands in his pockets, and leaned back on the chair of inlaid ebony. It was the attitude of a boor in a public-house. Out of place seemed that man, with his heel resting on the gorgeous carpet, his back leaning against the costly chair. He was well dressed, we know that he was even well born, but the ignoble nature had usurped power over all the advantageous circumstances of birth, condition, early association, and education; scarcely a trace of one of these remained. Ruffian was stamped upon the ugly face and expressed in every gesture of the muscular frame, spite of fashionable clothing and splendid surroundings.

"I should think you were cut out for a milk-and-water curate," he said, chuckling insolently. "It is a pity that the practising does not come up to the preaching. You used to frequent the 'Three Oaks' at Allonby. You used to get tipsy. Your character did not stand very high there."

Fernandez perceived that Mapleton was doing all that he could to provoke him into a quarrel. Probably he desired to disgrace him in the eyes of Lady Juliette, therefore Fernandez restrained his natural fiery impulses, and answered the insolence of Mapleton with polite sarcasm.

Lady Juliette, however, did not return, and after a while Fernandez took his leave, bowing coldly to Mapleton on quitting the room. But now Fernandez was possessed of an admirable likeness of the ex-tramp. It was necessary that it should be photographed; he called a cab, and was driven to a photographer in a retired, respectable street; there he desired that several duplicates might be taken of the pencil likeness which he had executed; they were large-sized vignettes.

Fernandez went out and entered his cab; he knew

not that he had been watched, that an evil, stealthy figure was lurking under the shadow of a dead wall which turned up by some stable-mews. The spy was a long, lank, ragged man, with a thin, villainous face, and a patch over his left eye. Had Fernandez looked at the man he would not have noticed him for he had never seen him before, and meanwhile the man kept the cab in view and ran after it, and he saw Fernandez enter the splendid mansion of Sir Guildford Owen. That villainous-looking personage dodged the young artist for days, and Fernandez, absorbed by his love, his art, and his own thoughts, never noticed the fact.

It was one snowy morning when he wended his way towards the photographer's; he received the photographs, there were twenty of them. Twenty ugly Mapletons jotting down their evil thoughts in their pocket-books! Fernandez buttoned them safely into his breast-pocket and walked out into the street. He did not take a cab that day, for though the snow lay thickly on the ground he was in the mood for exercise, but this was the moment that had been watched for. At the corner of a street a little, ragged, shivering girl, holding a box of matches in her hand, ran against him, then began to cry, and commenced a pitiful story about her mammy dying in a garret, and her four little brothers obliged to remain indoors since they had no clothes to wear.

"No fire," wailed the little girl, "no bed, nothing to eat! Come and see if it ain't true. Come and see."

Fernandez knew that such things were; he was now both anxious and able to relieve a case of this sort. He turned at once to the child, and told her to conduct him to her mother's room. He went on then, and the girl led him into a densely populated, squalid, evidently thievish neighbourhood. Clothes hung drying right across the street. There were rag and bone shops, old clothes shops, dirty fish shops; miserable children, half naked in that inclement weather, were quarrelling and crying in the street; brazen women stood about the doors of the gin palaces. The child led Fernandez up a blind alley. At the end of this was a small, old-fashioned public-house, tumbling to decay. It had a queer sign; it was called the "Knife Grinder," and there was a likeness of an itinerant grinder with his machine painted on the board. The child ran on and entered the door of this strange hostelry. Fernandez followed fearlessly.

In a room on the right some men were drinking, but the child led him on to an inner room. It was empty save for a couple of chairs—it was dirty, but Fernandez entered it. He looked around him in some surprise, then he perceived a door in the wall, a door from which all the paint had long ago worn away, a grimy, evil-looking door. The child pointed towards it.

"You must go in there," she said.

Fernandez walked up to the door. Almost immediately it opened from the inside, and disclosed a flight of steps leading down into a dark cellar. Startled and amazed, Fernandez hesitated for a moment whether or not he should descend. At that instant he felt a crushing blow at the back of his head; he was pushed forward and fell violently down the steps. At the same time the door was locked behind him. He lay senseless in the darkness for hours and hours.

(To be continued.)

THE NEW LORD MAYOR.—Alderman Thomas Dakin, the new Lord Mayor of the City of London, is a member of a Derbyshire family, and received his education, first at the grammar school of Knutsford, and afterwards at the London University. He is about sixty years of age, and a ready and fluent speaker. He has been a prominent member of the Court of Common Council for nearly thirty years, and has held in succession all the honorary offices at its disposal, representing in that capacity the ancient ward of Candlewick, of which eventually he became alderman on the death of Sir George Carroll in 1861. On the memorable visit of the Queen to the City in 1851, Mr. Dakin was appointed chairman of the Special Committee deputed to make the necessary arrangements for Her Majesty's reception at Guildhall. Afterwards as chairman of the General Purposes Committee of the Common Council, he took a leading part with Mr. Alderman Hale in founding the Freeman's Orphan School, one of the best of the many charitable institutions in connection with the Corporation of London. He has in various other respects as a member of the Court of Common Council rendered essential service to the citizens. In 1864, with the present Lord Mayor (Mr. Bosley), he filled the office of Sheriff of London in the Mayoralty of Mr. Alderman Hale, and now succeeds Mr. Bosley as Chief Magistrate of the City. He was long an intimate personal friend of the late Mr. Charles Pearson, the City Solicitor, and was associated with him in establishing the

Great Central Gas Company, of which he has been many years chairman. He was also, with Mr. Pearson, one of the chief promoters and afterwards a director of the Metropolitan Railway, and is President of the Great Western Railway of Canada, in which latter capacity he has crossed the Atlantic four times. He is, besides, a magistrate for Middlesex. At his recent presentation to the Lord Chancellor as Lord Mayor-elect, Lord Hatherley, in complimenting him on his election, referred to the active interest which Mr. Dakin had long taken in the promotion of popular instruction—a circumstance, he thought, of happy augury, seeing that in his Mayoralty the new Education Act will be brought into operation in the City of London, as elsewhere. Mr. Dakin has long been at the head of a firm of export druggists, first in Abchurch Lane, King William Street, and latterly in St. Catherine Cree Lane, Leadenhall Street, where he has extensive premises.

SCIENCE.

DR. JOULET has been experimenting on the use of cotton respirators, and states that, by their application, the disease known as miner's anaemia, and also the dangers of the effects of lead, copper, and mercury, to those who have to handle these metals, or work in vapours or dust thereof, may be prevented.

A VERY curious influence exerted by heat upon diamonds has been noticed at the works of St. Helen's, recently visited by the British Association. When a diamond is used to cut hot glass the diamond will only last for one day, and it assumes a milky appearance. The diamonds in constant use for cutting cold glass last about three months. Each diamond costs from 35s. to 45s., and is about three times the size of an ordinary glazier's diamond. Hot glass is cut more readily than cold glass.

TESTING OF GOLD.—A process for the colorimetric estimation of gold in quartz has been submitted by Mr. Skey, of the Government Laboratory, to the Philosophical Society of Wellington, New Zealand. It is stated fully to meet all requirements, and it does not necessitate the use of quicksilver. The stone to be estimated, after having been thoroughly crushed and calcined, is immersed in a bath of iodine or bromine, and permitted to stand for some time. Slips of Swedish filtering paper are then alternately dipped into the fluid and dried, until the paper is thoroughly saturated with the fluid, after which they are burned in a muffle. If no gold be present the ashes will be white; but 1 dw. to the ton will give them a beautiful purple colour. It is believed that further experiments with iodine or bromine baths of known contents of gold will enable the exact proportion of gold to be tested by the colorimetric method.

STEAM ROLLER WORK.—A report on work performed by the steam roller in Marylebone has been made by Mr. Greenwell, the chief surveyor. The roller was hired from Messrs. Aveling and Porter for a month on trial. It was a fifteen-ton one. The report says:—"The total number of yards rolled in thirty days was 23,145, and the expense of hire of roller, fuel, and water, 71l. 17s. 11d., which, after deducting for time expended for using spikes, shows the cost of rolling to have been 267 farthings per superficial yard. The expense would be reduced by purchase at least 30 per cent. The price varied considerably in the several streets, ranging from 1'04 farthing in Devonshire Street, where a considerable length was open with few hindrances and little traffic, to 4'08 farthings in Paddington Street, where only a short length was open with interruptions by traffic, and the material much cut up by heavy vehicles. From data as to the cost of rolling by horse labour, I find the average of a considerable number of streets to be a little under two farthings per yard, and more recently York Place and Townshend Road cost respectively 2'39 farthings and 3'49 farthings per yard. This shows horse-rolling to be nominally cheaper; but the vast superiority in every way, now almost universally acknowledged, of the work done by the steam roller, will prove the latter to be far the more economical. Less labour is required by sweepers, and less mud is removed by their operations than from the old system of coating macadamised roads. During the night-rolling which was introduced into Gloucester Place and Baker Street, the inhabitants of the locality who noticed a rough and almost impassable way in the evening, were agreeably astonished to find a road ready for their use in the morning."

PROPOSED NEW RAILWAY IN THE HIGH PEAK OF DERBYSHIRE.—A scheme is again on foot for supplying the Hope Valley, in the heart of the Peak of Derbyshire, with the advantages of railway communication with the outer world. A prospectus has accordingly been issued of the Hassop, Hatherage, and Castleton Railway Company, the object

of which is to construct a short single line, to be initiated and carried through by the landowners, commercial interests, and resident population themselves. The proposed capital is 60,000l., in shares of 10l. each, the liability of the shareholders being limited to the amount of their shares. The line is to be thirteen miles in length, and to start from the Hassop station of the Midland Railway, on the main line from Manchester to Derby. It is proposed that it shall cross the river Derwent near Froggatt, and then mainly follow the course of the river through the mountainous district to Castleton. The total cost is estimated at 57,000l., and the promoters believe that the traffic will immediately yield a revenue of 6,000l., with excellent prospects of a speedy increase, owing to the mineral resources of the district, its agricultural and manufacturing products, the passenger traffic of the summer months—as it opens a charming district for tourists and pleasure-seekers—and the removal of the difficulties which now attend the consumption of coal. It is stated that no local opposition is anticipated, a very large majority of the landowners being favourable to the undertaking, and many through whose property the line will pass have expressed their willingness to accept shares instead of cash as the price of their land. Mr. John Hall, of Castleton, is the solicitor to the undertaking, and the engineers are Messrs. Wilkinson and Smith, of Westminster.

FIFTEEN THOUSAND POUNDS, DEAD OR ALIVE!

CHAPTER XXVII.

You never had a servant to whose trust
Your business was more welcome.

All's Well That Ends Well.

STORME impatiently awaited the movements of Lord Barland, who was conversing apart with Bareflint and three elderly, white-haired gentlemen, all former friends of the late and present earl, who, at Lord Barland's desire, had accompanied him.

"Papa," whispered Childeric to the smuggler, "is your wife living?"

"I believe so, thank Heaven! I hope she is, lad."

"I thought she was dead. What you said to the man, Renfrew, last night bewildered me."

"My lad," replied Storme, gravely, "I have been holding back many a secret from you, and I fear I have told many a lie in my time—Heaven forgive me for them all!"

"But little Orie is your own child, is she not?"

"No, lad; but never breathe that to her. You were with me, some five years ago, when I took her, a baby then, from a boat that was adrift. You remember that?"

"A little—but then you have always told me she was my sister."

"Yes; and in that, as in telling you that you were my son, I lied. But I wronged no one, thank Heaven. Never tell Orie nor any one that she is not my own child. Heaven cast both of you into my arms, lad, and if I lied—and I did—may I be forgiven. I have never been a father, except in my love for you two."

"You do not know who Orie's parents were?"

"No."

"Some day some one may claim Orie, as Lord Barland claimed me?"

"He never claimed you, my lad. As soon as I learned you were his son I told him—and so cut my heart in two. Yes; some day I may discover a father or mother or both for my darling Orie. I named her after my lost wife; but here is Mr. Sanders. Say no more."

David came in with an open note in his hand, which he gave to the earl. The note read thus:

"Cressy Hall, Nov. 16.

"MR. DAVID SANDERS,
"Hasten to the Hall, and I will keep my promise."

"JULIA DE CRESSY."

"Her promise, you told me just now, was to tell you where to find your daughter?" said the earl.

"Yes, my lord."

"Then we will set out at once. Cousin Childeric may find his wife at the Hall; you may learn where to find the child of your Emily; and Jules de Cressy shall learn that he has neither title nor estates. Come, friends, we have decided upon our plan of action."

"Shall we take the two children with us, my lord?"

"Yes; I desire to introduce my son to Mr. Jules, and I see that Cousin Childeric already has the little girl in his arms. Ah! my cousin, you are very pale."

"Ay; I am fearing that this lady, Orlana Hayland, may not be my wife, after all."

"I am sure she is."

"Thanks for your cheering words, Cousin Childeric. But, now I think of it, my little girl has a ring that belongs to you. A lady's seal-ring which

I took from the dead hand of the lady I found on the raft of spars. In your little purse, Orie."

Storme drew the little silver box from the child's bosom, took from it a small packet, tore asunder the windings around it, and gave a small seal-ring to the earl, and said to Orie:

"You may play with the bracelet for a minute, my birdie, then we will shut it up again."

"This was the seal-ring of my poor wife," said the earl, in a sad, grave tone. "Unfortunate Clara! The arms and crest of the De Rollan family are engraved upon the seal. My son, reverence the love and memory of your noble mother, whose dying glance and dying gesture begged for you the protection of this great-hearted man." He placed his hand upon Storme's shoulder as he continued, in a voice tremulous with emotion: "A great and noble man, who merits all your love and my eternal gratitude. Heaven bless you, Childerice Storme, my beloved kinsman!"

"No more of that!" said Storme, in his frank, hearty way. "I would have been a savage had I not heeded the unspoken, dying petition of the lad's poor mother. Now, Orie, let me put the bracelet away—"

"Ah, that is the bracelet you told me you found with—"

"Take care, cousin!"

"Let me see the bracelet," continued the earl. "Put the child down a moment, and step aside with me. I wish to say a word. So—now let me examine the bracelet. It is what you found with the babe in the boat?"

"The same. Her clothes she wore at the time are in Glasgow, with my friend McTyre. Why do you examine it so closely? When I described it to you to-day as we rode hither, I noticed that you seemed deeply interested," remarked Storme, anxiously.

"A babe's bracelet, set with pearls, diamonds, emeralds, and rubies," said the earl, "with 'C. V.' engraved on the shield. Yes. I have heard of a bracelet like this."

In fact Orian had revealed to the late and present Earl of Barland her mournful history, and minutely described the lost bracelet, and how it was lost.

"You have heard of such a bracelet!" whispered Storme, hoarsely, and then to himself, with a sinking heart: "It is coming—the black day is not ended yet! I have lost my eagle of the sea, and I am yet to lose my dove of the surge—my darling Orie! I see the storm is gathering to rush down upon me! Heaven have mercy upon my heart!"

"Let us dismiss this subject, my dear cousin," said the earl as he returned the bracelet, smiling. "It is not at all probable that any one can have a better right to claim little Orie for his or her child than you have."

"Heaven grant it," replied Storme as he restored the bracelet to the little box, and laid it in Orie's bosom. "Yet it is possible the sorrow may come upon me, and in that bare possibility lies my incessant pain."

Immediately after this the entire party set out for a visit to Cressy Hall, whither we will precede them. Mrs. Hayland and Irene Dugarre, having walked rapidly, were soon at the entrance of the Hall, where they were met by a footman, who was evidently hastening upon some errand.

The footman was the same who had attended Lady de Cressy's carriage during the day, and, recognising Mrs. Hayland, he said:

"My lady has just learned that her carriage returned empty, and has ordered me to see that some other carriage be placed at your use. Please follow me, madam. Lady de Cressy is in her boudoir alone."

They found the haughty lady pacing her boudoir to and fro in great excitement.

"So you have had to walk all that distance," she said, in a bitter tone. "Pray be seated—both of you. Here!" to the footman, sharply. "Take this note to Sanders' Place, and give it into Mr. David Sanders's own hands. Be speedy—ride fast, and make no mistake."

The footman hurried away, and Lady de Cressy turned to Orian, saying:

"Excuse me for a moment; I will soon return," and, leaving the room, entered the hall, where she met the porter, whose duty it was to admit visitors at the front entrance of the mansion.

"I was seeking for one of the servants," said Julia; "but I am surprised to see you in this part of the Hall. Your place is below. No matter. Where is Sir Jules?"

"My lord is in the library, my lady."

"What do you mean by calling him 'my lord'?"

"Your lordship has not heard the news!"

"What news, Anderson?"

The porter was an aged man, over eighty, and had been master of the porter's chair of Cressy Hall for half a century. It gave the old man infinite pleasure

to hear and to tell news, and ever since the return of Sir Jules he had been trotting about the house, with something to tell. He rubbed his wrinkled hands gleefully, and said to Lady de Cressy:

"The old Earl of Barland is dead."

"Ah!" she cried.

"Yes, my lady! Sir Jules told me so a few minutes ago—ahem! a letter to that effect from his London lawyers, my lady! So he is now Lord Barland, and you are Lady Barland, Countess of Barland—ahem!"

"Then I am a peeress of England!" gasped Julia, her proud bosom heaving and falling with delight. "I am Countess of Barland! My dreams of greatness are realities at last. Say, is there not a viscounty in the gift of the earldom?"

"Yes, my lady. The Viscounty of Varpret belongs to the eldest son of him who may be Earl of Barland. The late earl had no children, so the title of Viscount of Varpret has remained dormant, but it belongs to the earldom."

"Then Jerome, being the only son legitimate of the present earl, is now Lord Jerome de Cressy, Viscount of Varpret?"

"True, my lady. I never thought of that," replied old Anderson, who detested Jerome.

"Think of it now, old fool! and as you go gossiping about remember to speak of it. Away to your chair, you old simpleton!"

The aged porter, much abashed, retreated to his great chair below. Lady Julia, filled with haughty triumph, hurried to the library and entered it unannounced.

Jules de Cressy, puffed up with his sudden greatness, was deeply engaged in pouring over a volume of Burke's Peerage, eager to see if he could not trace his line of succession into close alliance with a certain dukedom, which might in time fall to the earldom of Barland.

Time had been when he thought that to be Baronet de Cressy would fill the measure of his ambition. That greatness attained he had yearned to be Earl of Barland. Now that fate seemed to have given him an earldom, he already yearned for a more lofty rank.

So eager was he in his study of the book before him that he did not hear his wife as she entered.

She stood near the door by which she had entered, and gazed at him sorrowfully, thinking:

"It is because I am the wife of this contemptible wretch that I am Countess of Barland! He is the sun—and I must shine with his reflected light! This pitiful dog, that sought to ruin me, to blast my name, my life, my honour, to make me a mark to be hissed at! And chance alone has saved me from the foul degradation he would have placed upon me! Oh, how I hate you, Jules de Cressy!"

A sudden rustling of her satin robe caused him to raise his eyes from the book. His glance met hers—those grand, magnificent, flashing eyes of Julia—eyes beautiful but defiant, scornful, loathing, hating, eloquent of ineffable contempt.

He read these eyes well at a glance. He sprang to his feet, pale and fierce, and returned her gaze with a stare of deep, black, murderous menace, that matched her gaze of scorn.

"Why are you here, Julia Sanders?" he demanded, in a cold, stern, arrogant tone.

"To let you know that I shall assert my right to be Countess of Barland. How dare you call me Julia Sanders?"

"Ah, so you have heard that I am now the Earl of Barland. Well, know that I, Lord Barland, defy you—you and all your accomplices. You may remain in this house, if you like, until you are dragged out of it to a jail as an impostor—you and Kinmore and your ignoble son Jerome. You surprised me last night. I was a fool then. I defy you now. I shall punish all of you. I was an idiot last night. I am Earl of Barland now. Go, detestable woman, go!"

"Last night I proved myself to be lawfully your wife, secondly, and therefore Lady de Cressy," replied the undaunted woman, for she knew her claims were incontrovertible. "To-night I am Lady Julia, Countess of Barland, and to-morrow I will publish my claim to the world, by the press and by law. I know the ground on which I stand; I know the sand on which you think to build your defence. This house I shall not leave except—"

"Except what?"

"Except to enter Barland Castle as its declared and recognised countess."

"You are resolved?"

"I am."

"You will find me a dangerous husband, madam."

"I understand you. You will murder me—if you can. I am on my guard. I am not afraid of you, weakling. Good heavens! how could I ever have loved this apology for a man? You are to meet me again—you the criminal, I the accuser!"

She swept haughtily from his presence, with a terrible glance of rage and scorn.

He scowled and muttered a curse at her, and soon after rang a bell.

Ravasi appeared at the door in response to the summons.

"My lord?"

"Come nearer, Ravasi; first close the door. Come here to my side. I wish to whisper. Where is that man, Kinmore?"

"In his room, in a deep sleep of drunkenness, my lord."

"This is unfortunate. Go and try to rouse him. I must see him. Go."

The Italian departed, but soon returned.

"It is simply impossible to awake him, my lord. I pulled his hair, slapped his face. He said this morning that he intended to drink heavily to make up for lost time. He has been drinking wine all day. I can't wake him."

"Ha! I would give a thousand pounds if he would never wake."

"What, my lord?"

"A thousand pounds."

"Your lordship offered ten times as much for the capture, dead or alive, of the smuggler," whispered Ravasi. "And I imagine Kinmore's never waking would be cheap to your lordship at as much. I was a witness to all that passed between you and Lady de Cressy last night."

"Ha, rascal?"

"At least, I heard all."

"Where were you?" demanded Jules de Cressy, glaring at his swarthy-faced valet.

"With my ear, and sometimes my eye to the key-hole—first at one door and then at another. My lord, it is part of my nature to intrigue," replied Ravasi, with cool insolence. "Your lordship gave Kinmore a draft on your London bankers for ten thousand pounds, payable to his order. He shook it in my face to-day, boasting. He is a soft fool when he is in his cups; he is a tiger, a fiend when he is sober."

"Rascal! You pretended to be asleep when I retired to my bedroom?"

Ravasi smiled and bowed.

"Cunning wretch that you are! Did you hear what passed between me and—"

"Captain Storme? Yes, my lord. You played him an admirable trick, my lord. You sent him on a long journey to find his wife—Mrs. Orian Hayland."

"Ravasi, I admire you," said Jules, staring at his valet. "You are of Italy?"

"Born and reared in Naples, my lord."

"There are valuable fellows among these braves of Naples, Ravasi. Fellows who, for a few golden coins, will do anything. Now what would a Neapolitan of that kind do for—five thousand pounds?"

"He would do much—and more for twice five thousand, my lord."

"You are a valuable fellow, Ravasi. Kinmore has the cheque about him?"

"No, my lord, I have it. Here it is."

"Capital! Give it to me."

"When your lordship gives me one of like amount, payable to my order—or to bearer, if you please."

"Not so fast. How foolish in Kinmore to make himself tipsy. Why, if he has an enemy, Ravasi, his enemy may place a pillow on Kinmore's face, sit upon the pillow for a few minutes, and Kinmore would die. Then would every one say, even I, that he died of a drunken apoplexy! If that come to pass within an hour or two, why, not liking Mr. Kinmore, I will give to you, say, a cheque for ten thousand pounds."

"First a cheque for one thousand in hand, my lord."

"You are hard. But here it is," replied Jules, writing the draft. "This is for services rendered."

"Thanks, my lord. I am going to see that no one smother Mr. Kinmore," said Ravasi, grinning and departing.

(To be continued.)

DURING the first half of the current year the total number of wild beasts destroyed in the Central Provinces of India, for which Government rewards were paid, was 2,117, and the amount paid 16,876 rupees. The total is made up of 194 tigers (12 man-eaters), 439 panthers and leopards, 232 bears, 989 wolves, and 520 hyenas.

MANY of the farmers and others who are prohibited from coursing in the Home-park, Hampton, have withdrawn permission for Her Majesty's stag-hounds to go upon their land during the hunting season, and, without this consent, riding over the land is a trespass. This refusal will cause many unpleasant differences during the hunting season. The claims to coursing in the Home-park will form the subject of discussion in Parliament next session, as two honourable members have promised to bring the matter before the House.

THE LONDON READER AND LIFE AND FASHION.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. ST. MAUR.—Declined with thanks.
Miss S. B.—Declined with thanks.
JANE.—The handwriting is very good.
E. S. (Castlereagh).—Your communication has received due attention.

ADRIANA's letter has reached us without the lock of hair.

LITTLE POLLY.—The finale in "cyclone" is not sounded, and the o is long.

ANXIOUS ONE.—We are sorry that we can give you no further information.

J. W.—The commencement of the continuation of the tales "Sundered Hearts" and "The Flower of El Almeda" will be found in No. 334.

T. J. S.—Varnish the letters with a fine spirit varnish, and then apply some gold leaf, pressing it on to the letters with a woolen rag.

WILLIAM BRY.—Warts may be removed by the frequent application of lunar caustic. Your handwriting is bold and legible.

MERRY KATE.—Your suggestions have been received and will meet with due consideration. The handwriting is very neat and nice, and speaks a good deal for the precision and ability of the writer.

ALPHA.—The daily and weekly journals of January and February, 1870, contain reports of the lectures to which you refer. Consult also "The Transactions of the Royal Society."

X. X. X.—The writing, although the product of the left hand, is quite distinct enough. It would not prevent our perusal of any contribution you may desire to forward.

WHITE ROSE.—The handwriting is very nice. As seventeen is too early an age for the young gentleman to marry, it will be injudicious of you to send love letters to him.

MEIZ.—The following works may answer your purpose: "Baker's Land and Engineering Surveying," two parts, 1s. each; "Baker's Mensuration," 1s.; "Haddon's Rudimentary Book-keeping," 1s. Apply to any bookseller.

A LOVER OF LIFE, ETC.—You should consult an oculist at one of the public institutions or hospitals in London. It is too serious a matter to be treated by a person not professionally acquainted with the subject.

EXCELSIOR.—Your handwriting is unexceptionable. Speaking broadly, the appointments in the Civil Service are open to public competition. The "Civil Service Guide" published by Messrs. F. Warne and Co., of London.

SARAH.—We cannot say, unless it be to keep him warm; perhaps, too, because it shows the dirt and grease less than a white one; or maybe because that especial colour was the favourite colour of the Butchers' Company, whose annals extend a great many years back.

JOSHUA O'C.—Dr. Henry Davis's "Handbook of Domestic Medicine" is a good work, and answers to your requirements. The price is 6s.; any bookseller could procure it for you. Your handwriting is suitable to the capacity to which you aspire.

ERIN'S PRIDE.—1. A title and index for any volume of THE LONDON READER can be procured, by order, of any news-agent; price one penny, or post-free from 334, Strand, three-halfpence. 2. In such a case, as no stipulation was made concerning the payment of interest, interest cannot be claimed.

A BERLINER is thanked for his commendatory communication. In opposition thereto, however, we venture to say that it was the brother of the present King of Prussia and not the father who was on the 26th March, 1849, elected "hereditary Emperor of the Germans," and who in the following month declined that honour.

M. A. C.—The fur does not appear to belong to the best qualities, nor to be taken from any animal peculiar to foreign parts. It seems to be a very fine specimen of that which can be procured from some English quadruped, and is certainly inexpensive; probably it is a rabbit's skin. The handwriting is excellent.

T. B. L.—We think that a sleeping apartment for twelve men should measure about sixty feet by thirty feet, and should be nearly twenty feet high. The eighth part of an inch to which you refer in the aperture for ventilation might make a material difference if that aperture were otherwise notoriously insufficient.

ANOTHER CONSTANT READER.—The grandmothers of the children are both equally liable to the parish. The fa-

ther's liability would be enforced by the parish in preference, if the father could be found. Parents and other ascendants are only liable to the parish for the support of the children; they are not otherwise legally liable as parents merely.

T. R.—There is some justness of expression about the lines, and they contain nothing which could offend either the ear or the taste. Whatever interest they possess must be confined to your own circle, for your description of your friend's virtues is too general, and your probation of them too short to arouse any other sentiment in a stranger's mind than a pleasant conviction that your attachment though boyish was strong. The handwriting is in every respect peculiarly plain.

ISABELLA MCC.—Your particulars are too meagre to enable us to furnish any satisfactory reply. A Christian name should at least have been added, and other methods of identification are necessary. If you know anything more about the uncle than you have stated you might search the will office for a copy of his will. But very little can be done unless you know what and where the property is, and are prepared with positive proofs. Unless you are in a position to speak more precisely, it is probable that the basis of your expectations is your imagination.

A CONSTANT READER.—Your indefinite note does not detail to what trade the child's father belonged, and therefore we cannot say whether or not there is any institution suited to the case. You might purchase Low's book on Charities, and in its light consider the matter. In most cases, however, great influence is required to support a claim. The better course is often found to be to rely upon more direct exertions. Many people in trade are now glad to secure an apprentice, and often require no premium or a very small one. Push the matter through your own neighbours and acquaintance.

THE OLD GENERAL AND HIS KING.

"All men think all men mortal, but
Themselves," says Young. The case is put
Extremely strong, and yet, in sooth,
The statement scarce exceeds the truth.
That a to say, excepting those
So very long they can't suppose
They've long to live—there's scarcely one
But deems his earthly course will run
(Despite some transient doubts and fears)
Beyond his friend's of equal years!

In proof how far such dreams prevail,
Pray mark this old historic tale:

A general, whose lengthened term
Of life had found him quite infirm,

Was questioned by his majesty,
(Older, by several years, than he)

About his place of burial. "Where,"
The king inquired with friendly care.

"Pray tell me—would it please you best
Your brave, old, honoured bones should rest?"

"Ah!" said the soldier, "seldom I
Have thought of death; but when I die,

I'd have my grave not quite alone,
But near to where they've placed your own!"

J. G. S.

YOUTHFUL LOVER.—You must abstain yourself from the society of that lady to whom you feel unable to give your heart, and you must be most determined in the resolution to avoid her. If called upon to explain your conduct you must humbly confess that her charms evoked from you expressions which you were not at liberty to utter. This awkward predicament is likely to prejudice your social status unless you act with ingenuousness and discretion; it will at least teach you that "it is well to be off with the old love before you are on with the new."

MARY ANNE.—There need be no cause for despair, there is none, excepting in the heart of the individual who allows her spirit to succumb beneath the weight of trial. At such a time there should be a chastened spirit of inquiry as distinguished from a gaiety which is forced and untrue, but the chastened feeling should be tinged with hope because all willing hearts are entitled to hope; hopelessness is the lot only of the perverse. It is true that you must abandon your cherished plans, and this is just what your trouble amounts to; but when such a solid opportunity for fresh work has been afforded you there has been entirely taken away from you any just ground of complaint. It would, we consider, be unwise of you to reject the new opening because of the circumstances alluded to. Then indeed there would be room for despair, now there is none. Half the troubles of life arise because we cannot have our own way; the self-will that resists such a state of things brings on much greater grief than the wisdom which listens to the voice of prudence. Let us add, cheerily and heartily, that we advise you to give up the grand notions and to "buckle to."

A YOUNG TRAINER.—We are afraid that any description of the horse's teeth will be of little service to you compared with that practical knowledge of the subject you should be able to obtain from your seniors in the stables. However, we add, that the milk incisors appear at the end of fifteen days, the nippers are shed at thirty months, the four next teeth at forty-two months, and the four corner teeth at fifty-four months. The permanent corner teeth do not grow so quickly as the other incisors, and by these especially the age of the horse is determined. At first they scarcely rise above the jaw. Their middle then presents a hollow filled with blackish tartar, the margins of which are worn down as the tooth rises from the gum, and is rubbed against the corresponding one. This hollow gradually diminishes up to the age of eight years, when it is altogether obliterated. The hollow of the other incisors is obliterated at a later period than that of the corner ones, and the age of the animal is then estimated from the length of the incisors, which continue to increase.

TILLY, medium height, dark hair and eyes, and of a loving disposition.

MABEL, pretty, eighteen, dark, brown hair and eyes, and would make a good wife. Respondent must be dark, with an income; a surgeon preferred.

THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER, thirty-one, medium height, dark brown hair, fair complexion, domesticated, affec-

tionate, and even tempered. Respondent must be steady, and fond of his "ow's fire-side," one who has a home in the country preferred.

BLOOMER (a Jewish maiden), seventeen, tall, dark, and handsome. Respondent must be fair, and of the Jewish persuasion.

GUSSEY, eighteen, 5ft. 2½in., dark, of a happy disposition, and fond of dancing. Respondent must be tall, dark, with a black moustache, between twenty and thirty.

LOVELY NELL, nineteen, 5ft. 2in., brown hair, gray eyes, domesticated, and fond of singing. Respondent must be tall, fair, and about twenty-five.

ANNIE P., twenty-two, short, good tempered, and fond of home. Respondent must be tall, twenty-five, affectionate, and in business; a teetotaler preferred.

H. B., seventeen, 5ft. 3in., dark hair, hazel eyes, and in the Navy. Respondent must be of the same age, fair, loving, and cheerful.

TERESA, twenty-seven, medium height, dark, and would make a good, steady wife. Respondent must be about thirty, respectable, fair, and fond of home.

RACHEL, nineteen, tall, fair, handsome, loving, and faithful. Respondent must be tall, dark, good tempered, homely, and of the Jewish persuasion.

ROSEBUD, thirty, tall, fair, a widow, and a lover of rural life. Respondent should be tall and dark, with an income.

NELLIE R., twenty-three, tall, dark, cheerful, loving, and domesticated, wishes to receive the care of some steady young fellow with a view to matrimony.

LITTLE DWARF, nineteen, 4ft. 6in., dark, black curly hair, loving, and kind. Respondent must be about seventeen, rather short, loving, and able to make a kind wife.

TRUE BLUE, twenty-two, medium height, good looking, loving, fond of home, and a seaman in the Navy. Respondent must be of medium height, good looking, and fond of her own fireside.

UNION JACK, twenty-four, 5ft. 4in., light hair, blue eyes, good looking, loving, and fond of home. Respondent must not be over twenty-one, medium height, good looking, fond of home, and one who prefers a sailor.

LEAH (a Jewess), eighteen, short, dark, with wavy locks, black eyes, clear complexion, and domesticated. Respondent must be short, dark, and of the Jewish persuasion.

LOVELY FRED, tall, dark, handsome, black curly hair, whiskers, and moustache, fond of home, and has an income of 500l. per annum. Respondent must be tall, fair, pretty, fond of home, and affectionate; money no object.

ELIZA (a farmer's daughter), tall, fair, blue eyes, plays the piano, sings, is ladylike, domesticated, and affectionate. Respondent must be rather tall, nice looking, gentlemanly, loving, and fond of home comforts.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

BLUSHING ROSE is responded to by—"Tom Bowline," twenty, 5ft. 5in., blue eyes, good looking, and in the Navy.

SHANK PAINTER by—"Lizzie," twenty-five, 5ft. 4in., brown hair, dark blue eyes, and loving.

HOMEWARD BOUND by—"Helen," nineteen, medium height, and fair; and—"Maggie," tall, fair, good looking, and well educated.

CENTRE ECCENTRIC by—"B. K. O.," twenty-four, loving, good tempered, and in a good position; wishes for address and care.

LIZZY by—"Alcott" (a Blue-jacket in H.M. Navy), dark, 5ft. 6in., of respectable family, and, to a girl who would be willing to give him that love which is due to a husband, could be all that could be wished.

E. C. by—"Julia," 5ft. 2in., domesticated, loving, and cheerful.

STANDARD COMPASS by—"Rosebud," twenty-one, 5ft. 5in., fair, blue eyes, very pretty, has a small income, and is lively, kind, loving, and domesticated.

CHILDE HAROLD by—"Frances," tall, light hair, blue eyes, warm hearted, and has a good income.

W. P. W. by—"May," twenty-four, 5ft. 2in., dark brown hair, dark eyes, lively, loving, and domesticated.

S. A. by—"Jenny," fair hair and eyes, 5ft. 2in., loving, domesticated, and cheerful.

TOM FIFTEEN by—"Belle," eighteen, tall, dark hair and eyes, fair complexion, loving, and merry; and—"R. H.," eighteen, tall, fair, blue eyes, dark hair, and loving.

JOS COMPREHENS by—"Little Rosie," seventeen, rather inclined to embonpoint, but a pretty figure, fair, golden hair, blue eyes, regular features, can play the piano and dance, and dearly loves a sailor; and—"S. H. M.," fair, Auburn hair, dark brown eyes, and very loving.

ENDLESS CHAIN by—"Maggie," tall, hazel eyes, and light brown hair;—"Helen," medium height, light hair, and capable of making a good wife; and—"H. P. M.," fond of travelling, good looking, good tempered, very loving, and has a little property.

NELLY's care and address has been applied for.

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NOTICE.—Part 90, for NOVEMBER, Now Ready, price 7d., containing Steel Plate Engraving, coloured by hand, of the latest Fashions, with large Supplement Sheet of the Fashions for November.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, Strand, W.C.

†† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

ENGLISH TATTING (CONTINUED), CHILD'S CORSET, &c.

CORSET FOR A LITTLE GIRL FROM SIX TO EIGHT, IN CROCHET.—No. 15.

MATERIALS.—Thick knitting cotton; a very strong steel crochet needle.



SHOWING THE STITCH IN TATTING.—No. 8.

ABBREVIATIONS.—Stitch, st; chain, ch; single stitch, s s.

These stays are laced behind. Begin the work by a row of 55 ch, which serves as the commencement of one side for the back. Work the row backwards and forwards in s s. Proceed in the Russian style, so that there may be a kind of pattern row.

1st row.—See that the thread is in juxtaposition with the work, and so wound as to facilitate a succession of single stitches. At the end of every row there must be 1 ch, in order to turn easily, and that the 1st st on the new row may exactly match the last of the former one.

After concluding the 2nd row, introduce 8 stay-face holes in the 3rd. For this purpose, after 3 st, only work 1 s s, and miss the under one. Thus the hole is formed, to be followed by six Russian stitches; and these fill up the space to the second hole. Proceed thus, till all the other holes are worked, and close the row with 3 s s.

Then follows the first of the upper scallops, and so on, after each 4th row 4 ch, 1 s on 1st ch, (turn the work) 2 s s, 3 1 st, 2 s s, surround the ch.



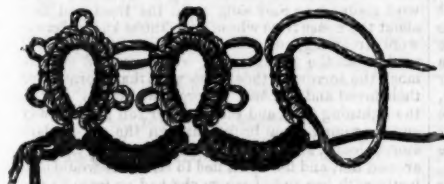
THE PICOT.—No. 9.

4th row.—Like the 2nd, and repeat the scallop.

Then let 12 more rows follow. After completing the 13th row provide for the armhole, introduce another thread for 40 ch, and let it be crocheted with cord. The shoulder-strap formed in this manner is about 3 rows broad. Having completed this, introduce a little gore, working over the hips 15 st, backwards and forwards. Repeat till reaching row 23; then crochet 39 st. Having (according to illustration) reached the central row, repeat from first directions, and join in the middle.

ENGLISH TATTING (continued).—Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, & 14.

In order to accomplish the right knot, take the thread from the left hand and between the fore-finger and middle-finger, and draw it forth in the direction indicated by illustration 5. Then repeat the process just described, and finally conduct the thread through the shuttle, and with the assistance of the right hand.



TATTING LACE.—No. 10.

Then lower the middle-finger, taking up the hitherto loose thread forming the right knot, then through raising the same thread till it draws close to the left knot, the effect of illustration 1 is accomplished. When the loop has been partially used up through the formation of several knots there must more thread be furnished from the shuttle.

Supposing a sufficient number of knots have been tatted, then form them into a scallop or ring, according to illustration No. 13. Secure the row of knots between the first-finger and the thumb of the left hand, and use the right hand to draw the thread from

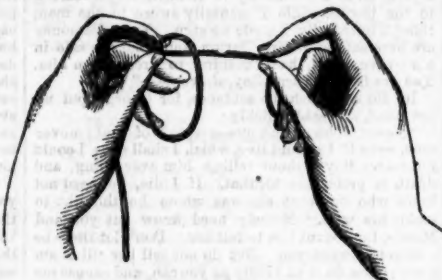
the shuttle. Illustration 13 represents what we have just described.

For picots giving a lace-like character to tatting see illustration No. 9. After accomplishing the double knots by crowding the left ones, leave between them hardly more room than is taken up by a coarse thread.

By means of this row will become visible loops, picots, and figures; and design can be easily imparted, as seen in illustration No. 12.

For the first ring work 6 d p, 1 p, 3 d p; leave about an inch space (on the thread) before taking up the thread for the next ring or scallop, then for carrying on the work proceed thus:—3 dbk united to the last p of the previous ring. Here the extra needle (see illustration No. 6) comes into use. By means of this needle draw the thread from the left hand through the picot, so that it may form a small loop; urge the shuttle through this loop from below to above and firmly draw the thread. Then what remains must be worked up into knots and picots.

The Joseph knot is used as a trimming. It con-



DOUBLE KNOT.—No. 11.

sists of about 4 right knots crowded together. For uniting the loops, one must urge the shuttle through them from above to below so as to give the proper position to the Joseph knot. Illustration No. 8 shows what this position ought to be.

For tatting with two threads, unite the ends of thread partly wound on a shuttle. Put the thread as a loop round the left hand, and let the shuttle with this thread hang down behind over the thumb of the same hand. Take in the right hand the shuttle with the second thread, and urge it through the loops as directed by illustrations. Observe that the thread



CHILD'S CROCHET CORSET.—No. 15.

urged with the right hand must always lie above the loop of the left hand. Remembering this, long or short rows of knots may be worked, and large or small scallops.

In this work changes may easily be effected, as shown in illustrations 10 and 14. There the rings are worked with one thread, one second thread having been left unworked, and the foundation thread made into a loop round one of the fingers of the left hand.

Illustrations 10 and 14 demonstrate the workings of both threads, inasmuch as one is made to appear black, the other white.

Taking leave of this subject of English tatting, we recommend beginners only to attempt, at first, rows of rings or scallops.

FASHIONS.

GIPEY BONNETS.—Fashionable milliners show the gipsy bonnet in all its variations. The bonnet may have a rolled coronet or merely a sloping front, a broad, clearly-defined crown or a soft cap crown, a drooping curtain or one rolled *en revers*, but the gipsy shape is preserved always. Coquettish and small is the idea one forms of a gipsy bonnet, yet the new styles give quite a stately air by reason of their height, and are far larger than any shape worn since small

fashions were introduced. We shall see fewer round hats worn this winter, as many ladies who had abandoned bonnets for the more jaunty hat will return to the stylish and graceful gipsy. As we have said before, the gipsy is not successful unless the coiffure is arranged to suit it. The front hair must be rolled or puffed, or else have very fluffy frizzes above the fore-



SHOWING HOW TO JOIN TO PICOT.—No. 12.

head and temples, the sides must be perfectly flat, with a tiny short curl behind each ear, while the back forms a long, soft châteline setting closely to the head. The slightest extra breadth added to the head by puffs or topsies destroys the slender contour necessary for the gipsy. The bonnet is placed far forward, the strings pass back of the ear to tie in front, and the curtain, or a long plume, droops over the heavy braids behind.

SHADED BONNETS.—For several winters past blue, green, or maroon bonnets have not been worn by ladies who dressed stylishly, but this season they are selected by the most fastidious. Deeper and gayer colours are used in millinery, and all black bonnets are no longer considered more fashionable than all others. The idea now is to have the bonnet match the suit with which it is worn, consequently milliners display bonnets of every colour, with two or three shades of the colour in each bonnet. Bonnets for promenade and church are of the darkest, richest colours in the costume, and the shades of the bonnet should approach very nearly. Prune blue, navy blue, scarabée, plum-colour, invisible green, and cigar brown bon-



LOOP.—No. 13.

nets will be worn with suits of the same colour, and also with black costumes. Prettiest among the shaded bonnets are those of the brown shades, the lightest pale golden-brown for the velvet, felt, or gros de Londres, of which the bonnet is made, a darker shade for the velvet torsades and facings, a string of each shade, while the ostrich tips represent three or four shades. Lilac and purple tints shade prettily if the rosy hues are kept away from those tinged with blue. Pale gray shades into deeper tones, like shadowy frescos. Light blue shades do not blend effectively, but dark, deep blues are very rich. Green shades admirably.

THE PRINCESS ALICE.—This is the name given to a high, stylish bonnet for young faces. It is modelled somewhat like the Greek cap, with high soft crown, a fall of lace over the forehead, and narrow strings to tie under the chin. This is made in black lace, in blue velvet, green, and other fashionable colours,



TATTING LACE.—No. 14.

with ostrich tips at the side, and a band and strings of gros grain of a deeper shade. Made of fine lace this bonnet is expensive.

ANOTHER novelty, very simple and becoming, resembles in shape the helmet worn by French cuirassiers. It is made of black velvet, edged with a lace border, on which jets are sewed in a floral design. The transparent border over light hair is exceedingly pretty. Still another lovely hat for a blonde is simply a scooped-out cover for the front of the head, tied down at the sides in the way seaside hats were

worn in the summer. Made of black velvet, with pale blue gros grain twisted across the top from ear to ear, and two long slender ostrich plumes streaming behind, this is exceedingly becoming.

LEIGHTON HALL.

CHAPTER XL.

THE wedding had been appointed for the 20th of June, and it was now the 20th of July, just one month from the day when so fearful a calamity had overtaken poor Georgie. Every one, even to Mrs. Burton, had ceased to hope for Georgie now. They knew she could not live, and waited anxiously for the final shock which should terminate her life. All the old restlessness and desire to be moved continually was gone, and she would lie for hours just where she was put, with her strong hand clasped over the feeble one, and her eyes closed, though they knew she was not asleep; for occasionally the pale lips would move and those nearest to her caught whispered words of prayer, and knew that at the last the soul so near to death was seeking for that peace without which to die is terrible. She did not talk much, though her speech was more natural, and could easily be understood, but it seemed to tire her to talk; and when each morning Roy came in to see her she would only press his hand and nod her thanks for the flowers or fruit he always brought her. She was greatly changed in more ways than one. Her glorious beauty, of which she had been so proud, was gone; and even her long black hair was streaked here and there with gray.

But Georgie cared for none of these things; her interest was elsewhere, and the intensity of her anguish and remorse so great that often when she lay with her eyes shut John saw the great drops of sweat standing upon her brow and about her mouth. To John as well as to Roy she had said, "Pray for me," and John did not repel her now with scorn, but all unworthy as he felt himself to be, tried to pray for his poor sister, promising to be himself a better man if peace were given to her. But peace came at last, and brought a brighter, happier expression to the worn face, and drove the look of terror from the eyes, and then Georgie talked freely with her brother.

It was the night of the 20th, and he alone was watching with her. Again there was a moon, and its silvery light came in through the open window and shone on Georgie's white face, and made it seem to John like the face of an angel, as she drew his head down to her and kissed him so lovingly, saying to him:

"Dear John, you are so good to me; let me talk with you; let me tell you while I can just how it was that night a month ago. I told you all a lie; there was no one in my room. I made it up to screen myself, for I must have some excuse for Roy, some reason why I could not marry him. You told me once the dead might come to life to witness against me. John, they did; he did; Henry did; he is not dead; he was here in the garden; I saw him and talked with him, and gave him my diamonds to keep him quiet. But, John, oh, John, don't think that of me!" she cried, as she saw the look of horror on his face, and guessed of what he was suspecting her. "I never for an instant thought to marry Roy after I knew he was living. I only did not want him to know about it. I don't want him to know now. Oh, John, can't I go to Heaven unless I tell Roy everything?"

She was getting greatly excited, and John tried to quiet her, and brought her a glass of wine, and when she was better listened while in her slow way she told him, what the reader already knows of her interview with Henry Morton, of all he said to her, of her utter despair and agony, and her planning the story of the robbery to account for her fearful excitement, and the sudden illness she meant to feign so as to put off her own marriage.

"But Heaven planned for me better than I could plan for myself," she said; "and sent the paralysis as a sure means of separating me from Roy. Oh, John, Henry told me it was Roy's house he robbed in London years ago. I never knew that, or if I heard the name, I forgot it afterwards. Did you know it, John?"

"I knew it was the name Leighton, but thought it another family," John said.

And Georgie continued:

"Had I known it, I could not have done as I did, it seems to me, though I was bad enough for anything. But I hope Heaven has forgiven me. I feel so different, so sorry for the past; the fear of death is gone, only I don't know about telling Roy, and Aunt Burton. Must I, John? Do you think I ought?"

John did not think so. Telling them now could do no good, and would only add to their wretched-

ness, he said, and, much as he liked the truth, he could not see that she was bound to a confession of what could in no wise benefit any one, especially as there was no possibility of her secret ever being known except to himself.

"For, Georgie," he continued, "I have something to tell you; something I have withheld because I was not sure how much you knew, or how certain you were who it was that took your diamonds. Henry Martin is dead—really, truly dead; for I saw him myself about a week ago, when I went with Roy to London for a day. He could not have sailed as early as he told you he intended doing. Perhaps he was afraid of detection, and kept quiet awhile in the city. At all events he was booked in the 'Scotia' as Tom Anderson, and in going on board the night before she sailed, either lost his footing or made some mistake, and was drowned before he could be reached. On examining his person, a handsome set of diamonds was found secreted about him, and as they answered to the description given of yours, a telegram was at once forwarded here, and Roy and myself went immediately to London, Roy swearing to the jewels, while I mentally swore to the man, though outwardly I made no sign. Your diamonds are here safe with Mrs. Burton, and Henry is safe in his grave. You have nothing to dread from him. You are free to marry Roy, if ever—"

He did not finish the sentence, for Georgie put up her hand, and said, quickly:

"Never, John; don't please speak of that; never now, even if I should live, which I shall not; I could not marry Roy without telling him everything, and death is preferable to that. If I die, he need not know who or what she was whom he thought to make his wife. Nobody need know but you and Maude, for I want you to tell her. Don't let there be a secret between you. But do not tell her till I am gone; then do it as kindly as you can, and excuse me all you can. I was young and foolish when I knew Richard Le Roy, and he flattered and turned my head, and promised to make me a lady, and I hated to be so poor, to stay all day in that little school-room, with that set of tiresome children, and I envied his sisters when I saw them going out to parties so elegantly dressed, and knew they had just whatever they liked best. There was nobody to warn me; nobody who knew what he said to me, or how he lured me on to ruin, and made me believe in him more than in Heaven, and so I fell, and he died before he could make me a reparation; for had he lived, I do believe he would have saved me from disgrace. He said he loved me; I hope, I believe he did. Tell Maude so: tell her not to hate me for Annie's sake. Annie was not to blame—darling Annie!"

She was very much exhausted with all she had heard and said, and John tried to quiet her, and bade her rest and not talk any more then; but she was not yet through with all she had to say.

"Let me tell you while I can," she whispered; "tell you what I want you to do. He told me of a Janet over in Scotland waiting for him, and a little blind boy whose sight he hoped to have restored now he had the means. Find them, John; they live in —, not far over the border. When you and Maude are married go there on your bridal trip. I have money of my own—two thousand pounds, which Aunt Burton gave me. It is all in bonds. I shall give it to you, and a part of it you must give to her—to Janet and her little ones. That is something I can do, and it will make me do more easily knowing somebody will be benefited by me. Promise, John, to find her, or send the money to her in some way, but never let her know she was not his wife. Tell her his friends sent you."

She could not talk longer then, for her speech was failing her and her utterance so thick that it was with difficulty John could understand her. He made it out, however, and promising compliance with all she asked, soothed, caressed, and quieted her until she fell into a sleep which lasted several hours, and from which she awoke with a fresher, better look upon her face and in her eyes. But this did not deceive her, nor delude her with vain hopes. She knew that life was not for her, neither did she desire it now. Hoping and believing, though tremblingly, that all would be well with her hereafter, she looked forward calmly, even longingly, to the death which was to free her from all the bitter pangs of remorse which, should she live, would be hers to endure continually. The sight of Roy and her aunt was a constant pain and reproach to her, for she knew how unworthy she was of the fond love manifested for her by the one, and the extreme kindness and delicate attentions of the other.

"If I could tell them, if I dared confess; but I cannot, I cannot, and John says I need not," she thought often to herself, praying earnestly to be guided aright, and not to be allowed to leave undone anything necessary to her own salvation.

Once when Roy was sitting by her and holding in

his her white, wasted hand, she said to him, hesitatingly:

"Roy, you are a good man, one in whom I have confidence; tell me, please, if a person has done something wrong, very wrong, ought he to confess it to everybody or anybody, unless by so doing he could do some good, or repair an injury?"

Roy did not think it necessary, he said, though he was not quite sure that he fully understood the case. There were great drops on Georgie's face, and her lips twitched convulsively, as she said:

"Roy, there was something in my early life which I meant to keep from you, which I want to keep from you now. It would distress me greatly to tell it. Do you think I must—that is, will Heaven love me more if I tell?"

Instantly there came back to Roy a remembrance of Georgie's strange conduct at the time of their engagement, and he felt certain that whatever it was now preying on her mind was then trembling on her lips. What it was he did not care to know; it could not affect him now. Georgie was passing away from him to another and he believed better world. He had never loved her as he knew in his heart he was capable of loving the young girl whose voice he heard just then in the yard below; but during the days he watched beside her and saw how changed she was, how gentle and patient she grew, and how earnestly she was striving to find the narrow way, even at the eleventh hour, he felt that he liked her as he had never done before, liked her so well that he did not care to hear anything which could lower her in his opinion, and so he said to her:

"Georgie, I fancied that something was troubling you, but do not distress yourself for me. If the something in your past life does not now affect any one, keep it to yourself. I do not wish to know it. Neither, I am sure, would Mrs. Burton if the telling it would trouble you. Be satisfied with my decision, and let us remember you as you seemed to us."

He bent down and kissed her softly, while the tears rained over her face, and her pale lips whispered:

"Bless you, Roy, bless you for the comfort you have given me. Think of me always as kindly as you can, but as one who had erred and sinned and hoped she was forgiven, and who loved you, Roy, oh so much, for I do, I do, better than you love me. I have known that all along, known that I was not to you what you are to me, and in time you will find another to take my place; find her soon, perhaps, and if you do, don't wait till I have been dead the prescribed length of time, but marry her at once, and bring her to your mother, if she is not already there."

Georgie said the last slowly, and, looking into Roy's eyes, saw that he understood her, and went on:

"She is a sweet girl, Roy; pure and womanly. Your mother loves her as a daughter, and I give her my right in you. If you succeed, don't forget, please, what I say; if you succeed, remember that I told you I knew all about her. Don't forget."

A violent fit of coughing came on, and in his anxiety and fear Roy said but little heed to what Georgie had said with regard to Miss Overton, who soon came into the room and signified her readiness to do whatever she could for the suffering Georgie.

The August morning was a glorious one, and every shrub and flower and plant of grass at Oakwood seemed fairly to laugh as, glistening with the rain drops which had fallen through the night, they lifted their heads to the beautiful summer sunlight which came up the eastern hills and bathed the earth in a sea of mellow light. The air, purified by the thunder shower, was cool and sweet, and laden with the perfume of the many flowers which dotted the handsome lawn, while the birds seemed almost bursting their little throats with gladness as they sang amid the trees and flew about the house from whose door-knobs knots of grape were streaming, and whose shutters were closed as if to shut out the glorious day which seemed only to mock the sorrow of those who wept that morning for their loved and lost one. Georgie was dead! Just as the lightning flash and the thunder roll passed away and the young moon broke through the rift of dark storm clouds, she looked her last good-bye to those around her, and her spirit fled to Him who would deal justly with her and of whom she had no fears as she went down the river bank and launched out into the stream whose waters never return to lave the shores of time.

It was a very easy death she died, so easy that John, who held her in his arms, only knew the moment of her departure by the sudden pressure of her hand on his and the falling of her head upon his bosom. She had said good-bye to every one, and left for all a friendly word, and tried, as far as possible, to repair any wrong she might have done. To Edna, who was often with her, she had said once, when they were alone:

"I have something to say to you. I knew you from

the first, and but for Maude and John, should have told Roy who you were. I disliked your being there, and meant to do you harm. I purposely worried and annoyed you by talking so much of Charlie's wife, and I exaggerated matters when I told of Mrs. Churchill's feelings towards her daughter-in-law, and what Roy said about her coming in disguise. You remember it, I think. I wanted to make sure that you would neither remain at Leighton nor divulge your real name to them. Forgive me, Edna, won't you? I have much need of your forgiveness."

Edna had stooped and given her the kiss of pardon, feeling, as she did so, that a load was lifted from her heart, and that she could now more easily make herself known to Charlie's friends.

"Do it at once," Georgie said. "Don't put it off, but let Roy know who you are."

Edna promised that she would do so; then, with another kiss for the repentant woman, she went back to Leighton, and when next she looked on Georgie she was cold and pale in death, but lay like one asleep upon her pillow, with the white lilies in her hand and a look of perfect peace upon her face. The pinched, disturbed look was gone, and in its stead death gave back to her much of her glorious beauty. The bright colour had faded from her cheeks; there were threads of snow in her black hair, and her glorious eyes were closed for ever; but otherwise she looked the same, and poor Mrs. Burton wrung her hands distractedly as she bent over her beautiful darling, and called upon her to waken and speak to the mother who loved her so much. They dressed her in her wedding robes, and Roy kissed his pale, dead bride with a great sob of pain, and forgot for once when Brownie's step came near, and did not hear when she spoke to him. It was a grand funeral—the largest ever known in Somerville, for the circumstances attending Georgie's death had been so strange and sad that hundreds had gathered from a distance, and came to show their respect for the mourning family. They laid her by the side of Annie.

(To be continued.)

FACETIÆ.

AN OUTRAGE ON HUMANITY.—A ruthless wretch has just insisted on seeing us, in order to perpetrate this savage assault on the English language. He says a man who glances at-cans (aaknee) must be possessed of can-eyeball (cannibal) propensities. —*Pun.*

THE LAW'S A LOTTERY!

People had better be shy of Lambeth Police-court? Why? Just read this:

"Mr. Chance, the newly-appointed magistrate for Lambeth, took his seat for the first time on Monday."

It is evident that all cases henceforth will be decided by Chance!

TRIFLE TARD.—The Oxford Political Economy Professor is about to give a course of lectures on "Money." This is complimentary to Lord Lytton, but, considering events, lectures on the "Lady of Lyons" would be more interesting. Oxford is still a little behind the time. —*Punch.*

SINCERITY.

Grace: "I am going to see Clara to-day. Have you any message?"

Charlotte: "I wonder how you can visit that dreadful girl. Give her my love." —*Will-o'-the-Wisp.*

TOO GREAT LUXURY.—Mrs. Malaprop, who has heard much lately of the fall of the present Dinnersty in France, says she is not in the least surprised, for she always procrastinated that all the Epicurians goings on in Paris would end in a cataclysm. Could she mean cataclysm? —*Punch.*

A PROPER PENDANT.—One of the papers read before the British Association at Liverpool dealt with "the Earth's Eccentricity." At the next Social Science Congress a communication will be made respecting "the Earth's Inhabitants' Eccentricity." —*Punch.*

MUSICAL MISCONCEPTION.

Seline (on a visit to her cousin): "By-the-bye, Clara dear, do you know 'The Moon is Brightly Shining'?"

Clara: "I am delighted to hear it; I shall continue practising no longer. Would you believe it, darling, when I sat down to the piano the rain was coming down in torrents; what a delightful change. (Rising.) I can now keep my appointment with Charley, so I wish you good night, and thank you for the information." (Exit Clara.) —*Will-o'-the-Wisp.*

AN ALARMING PARAGRAPH.—A DEAD SHOT.—We read in an evening newspaper on Monday night a statement to the effect that "the Prince of Wales will visit Lord and Lady Walsingham at Merton Hall, near Theford, on the 21st November, and will shoot for several days through Lord Walsing-

ham—" The remainder of the line was, however, so blotted with printers' ink as to be perfectly illegible. Being utterly unable to make out any valid reason why such cruel sport as that of shooting through noblemen should be exclusively enjoyed by a Prince of the blood royal, we purchased a second copy of the same paper, and had the pleasure to find our fears groundless. The paragraph finished with the words, "through Lord Walsingham's well-stocked preserves." —*Will-o'-the-Wisp.*

"L'EAU" (MILKMAN'S CRY.)

We read in the *Christian World* (all honour to it for its successful exertions to erect a monument to the author of the "History of Moll Flanders") that there is wanted a—

GENERAL SERVANT, immediately, in a small family, where two cows are kept. One of good character. A Baptist preferred. —Apply B. C. & Co.

An applicant will do wisely to stipulate that she shall milk only the cow of good character. But why a Baptist? Does the advertiser vend milk? In that case he should be aware that there is such a thing as a lactometer. Still, B. C. may mean only a Baptist cowkeeper, who may desire a servant of his own faith. In that case we may remark that a presumably religious person has no business to keep one cow of other than good character. —*Punch.*

THE WOODLAND PATH.

Once more I tread the pathway sweet,
That, in my boyhood's day,
Oft led my wild and wayward feet
To ramble far away.

The mighty elm still overbrower
Its soft and winding thread,
And clasping vines of trumpet-flower
Nod lightly overhead.

It picks its way from stone to stone
Across the merry brook,
And then winds on through covert lone,
And many a leafy nook;
Through mossy mounds and ferny deeps,
It softly skirts the hill,
Curves down again, and gently creeps
By Farmer Felton's mill.

But now, while roars the autumn blast,
Whirling the leaves in wrath,
Sad memories come trooping fast
Along the woodland path.

My rustling feet seem not alone;
Again almost I hear
The gentle step beside my own
Which made my boyhood dear.

The touching of a hand long cold,
The music of a voice
That thrilled me in the days of old,
And made my heart rejoice,
Again are near me, shadow-like,
Beneath the swinging boughs;
But only the whirling dead leaves strike
Upon my aching brows.

Oh, other hearts as wild from home,
And other feet as free,
May now along the pathway roam,
And in these woodlands be;
But no lonelier step than mine can stir
The dead leaves downward cast,
With my thoughts among the things that were,
The phantoms of the Past! N. D. U.

GEMS.

POLITENESS is the just medium between ceremony and rudeness.

Those who praise you in the beginning will ask favours in the end.

An honest employment is the best inheritance that can fall to any one.

GENIUS has limits, virtue has none; every one pure and good can become purer and better still.

MANKIND has been learning for six thousand years, and yet how few have learned that their fellow beings are as good as themselves.

THE more a man knows the less he is apt to talk; discretion allays his heat, and makes him coolly deliberate what and where to speak.

THE worthiest people are most injured by slanders; as we usually find that to be the best fruit which the birds have been pecking at.

STATISTICS.

THE revenue returns from the 1st of April to the 22nd of October show the following results:—Receipts, 39,689,156*l.*; last year, 37,569,023*l.* Expenditure, 39,585,321*l.*; last year, 41,197,700*l.* Balances, 1,523,667*l.*; last year, 1,046,931*l.*

FORTIFICATIONS.—The expenses of fortifications to 1st April last are given as follows in a Parlia-

mentary return recently issued:—At Portsmouth, 2,203,470*l.* 10*s.*; Plymouth, 1,416,957*l.* 13*s.*; Pembroke, 285,772*l.* 3*s.* 2*d.*; Portland, 336,146*l.* 19*s.* 1*d.*; Gravesend, 186,428*l.* 0*s.* 7*d.*; Chatham, 252,115*l.* 11*s.* 10*d.*; Sheerness, 301,173*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*; Dover, 234,334*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.*; Cork, 89,462*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*; providing and fixing iron shields, 7,806*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.* Incidental expenses; works, 161,643*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*; experiments, 14,670*l.* 2*s.*; surveys, 30,813*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.*; clearance works, 46,666*l.* 14*s.* 5*d.*; legal and other incidental expenses, 32,180*l.* 10*s.* 5*d.*, total, 5,655,643*l.* 12*s.* 1*d.*

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TEA FOR THE MILLION.—A correspondent thus writes:—"Many of your subscribers may be glad to know that the raspberry-leaf—I mean the second leaf (that now on the branches)—makes the finest tea I ever tasted. The spring leaves are too strong. I have used this tea myself for twelve months at a time without any fault being found with it. The leaves, when dry, should be infused just in the same manner as ordinary leaves. The garden raspberry will do; but I prefer the wild variety, which is very plentiful in the woods and dingles of England."

ISINGLASS.—Russian isinglass dissolves very rapidly in hot water, seldom leaving over 2 per cent. of insoluble residue; it is pleasant to the taste, and yields a firm and transparent gelatine. Bengal or Indian isinglass dissolves readily, but leaves a much larger proportion of residue—from 7 to 13 per cent.; it often has a fishy taste, and its gelatine is not clear. The gelatine obtained from Brazilian isinglass is opaque and acrid. The isinglass prepared in China is seldom exported.

A CURE FOR SOMNAMBULISM.—Two instances of somnambulism being perfectly cured by means of bromide of potassium are recorded in the *Paris Les Mondes*. A woman twenty-four years old, who had attacks two or three times a week for ten years, after taking two grammes of bromide of potassium in 75 of water daily, the dose being gradually increased to six grammes, was entirely cured at the end of two months. The other case, a girl of eight years, after taking one gramme morning and evening for a short time, was completely restored to health.

MISCELLANEOUS.

UPWARDS of 500 families in Lisburn are suffering from the effects of the floods.

MISS GARRETT, M.D., is a candidate for a seat at the Metropolitan School Board for the Marylebone division.

THE Queen has contributed 100*l.* to the "Captain" Relief Fund, Princess Louise and Prince Arthur 20*l.* each, Prince Leopold 15*l.*, and the Prince of Wales, 50*l.*

CAPTAIN MORLEY, R.N., who was present at the battle of Trafalgar, and served for a considerable time under Lord Nelson, has just died. He entered the navy in 1801.

THE marriage of the Princess Louise with the Marquis of Lorne will not take place until about the end of February. We learn that Her Royal Highness has met with an accident—a sprain of the knee—at Balmoral.

THE death is announced of Captain Frederick Chamier, R.N., whose sea novels about twenty-five years ago attained a considerable degree of popularity. He was born in 1796, entered the navy in 1800, and served in the American war of 1812.

THE story that Messrs. Baring Brothers had made investments on account of the Emperor of the French is flatly denied by that firm, who add that they do not hold any stocks or objects of value on his account.

Two elderly men named Rogers and Minnett are in custody in London on the charge of obtaining money by pretending to be collectors on behalf of an imaginary association for the reduction of the income-tax.

ON the 15th or 16th of December, after paying the accustomed annual visit to the tomb of the late Prince Consort at Frogmore, Her Majesty will leave Windsor for Osborne, where the Queen will spend Christmas.

THE COUNTESS OF DERWENTWATER.—This lady has visited Consett, in company with two gentlemen. Her "ladyship" paid a visit to Mrs. Brown, wife of the incarcerated bailiff, and also to Mrs. George, the lady with whom she lodged for a short time when resident in Consett. Her "ladyship" was visited by two of her faithful adherents, but nothing has transpired on which any reliance can be placed. Gossips have it that her "ladyship" has had a long interview with the son of Mr. Bruce who gave her 1,500*l.* and the promise of the estate in a month. Of course this will pass as current coin for a few days till the electro-plate wears off.

worn in the summer. Made of black velvet, with pale blue gros grain twisted across the top from ear to ear, and two long slender ostrich plumes streaming behind, this is exceedingly becoming.

LEIGHTON HALL.

CHAPTER XL.

The wedding had been appointed for the 20th of June, and it was now the 20th of July, just one month from the day when so fearful a calamity had overtaken poor Georgie. Every one, even to Mrs. Burton, had ceased to hope for Georgie now. They knew she could not live, and waited anxiously for the final shock which should terminate her life. All the old restlessness and desire to be moved continually was gone, and she would lie for hours just where she was put, with her strong hand clasped over the feeble one, and her eyes closed, though they knew she was not asleep; for occasionally the pale lips would move and those nearest to her caught whispered words of prayer, and knew that at the last the soul so near to death was seeking for that peace without which to die is terrible. She did not talk much, though her speech was more natural, and could easily be understood, but it seemed to tire her to talk; and when each morning Roy came in to see her she would only press his hand and nod her thanks for the flowers or fruit he always brought her. She was greatly changed in more ways than one. Her glorious beauty, of which she had been so proud, was gone; and even her long black hair was streaked here and there with gray.

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It was the night of the 20th, and he alone was watching with her. Again there was a moon, and its silvery light came in through the open window and shone on Georgie's white face, and made it seem to John like the face of an angel, as she drew his head down to her and kissed him so lovingly, saying to him:

"Dear John, you are so good to me; let me talk with you; let me tell you while I can just how it was that night a month ago. I told you all a lie; there was no one in my room. I made it up to screen myself, for I must have some excuse for Roy, some reason why I could not marry him. You told me once the dead might come to life to witness against me. John, they did; he did; Henry did; he is not dead; he was here in the garden; I saw him and talked with him, and gave him my diamonds to keep him quiet. But, John, oh, John, don't think that of me!" she cried, as she saw the look of horror on his face, and guessed of what he was suspecting her. "I never for an instant thought to marry Roy after I knew he was living. I only did not want him to know about it. I don't want him to know now. Oh, John, can't I go to Heaven unless I tell Roy everything?"

She was getting greatly excited, and John tried to quiet her, and brought her a glass of wine, and when she was better listened while in her slow way she told him, what the reader already knows of her interview with Henry Morton, of all he said to her, of her utter despair and agony, and her planning the story of the robbery to account for her fearful excitement, and the sudden illness she meant to feign so as to put off her own marriage.

"But Heaven planned for me better than I could plan for myself," she said; "and sent the paralysis as a sure means of separating me from Roy. Oh, John, Henry told me it was Roy's house he robbed in London years ago. I never knew that, or if I heard the name, I forgot it afterwards. Did you know it, John?"

"I knew it was the name Leighton, but thought it another family," John said.

And Georgie continued:

"Had I known it, I could not have done as I did, it seems to me, though I was bad enough for anything. But I hope Heaven has forgiven me. I feel so different, so sorry for the past; the fear of death is gone, only I don't know about telling Roy, and Aunt Burton. Must I, John? Do you think I ought?"

John did not think so. Telling them now could do no good, and would only add to their wretched-

ness, he said, and, much as he liked the truth, he could not see that she was bound to a confession of what could in no wise benefit any one, especially as there was no possibility of her secret ever being known except to himself.

"For, Georgie," he continued, "I have something to tell you; something I have withheld because I was not sure how much you knew, or how certain you were who it was that took your diamonds. Henry Martin is dead—really, truly dead; for I saw him myself about a week ago, when I went with Roy to London for a day. He could not have sailed as early as he told you he intended doing. Perhaps he was afraid of detection, and kept quiet awhile in the city. At all events he was booked in the 'Scotia' as Tom Anderson, and in going on board the night before she sailed, either lost his footing or made some misstep, and was drowned before he could be reached. On examining his person, a handsome set of diamonds was found secreted about him, and as they answered to the description given of yours, a telegram was at once forwarded here, and Roy and myself went immediately to London, Roy swearing to the jewels, while I mentally swore to the man, though outwardly I made no sign. Your diamonds are here safe with Mrs. Burton, and Henry is safe in his grave. You have nothing to dread from him. You are free to marry Roy, if ever—"

He did not finish the sentence, for Georgie put up her hand, and said, quickly:

"Never, John; don't please speak of that; never now, even if I should live, which I shall not; I could not marry Roy without telling him everything, and death is preferable to that. If I die, he need not know who or what she was whom he thought to make his wife. Nobody need know but you and Maude, for I want you to tell her. Don't let there be a secret between you. But do not tell her till I am gone; then do it as kindly as you can, and excuse me all you can. I was young and foolish when I knew Richard Le Roy, and he flattered and turned my head, and promised to make me a lady, and I hated to be so poor, to stay all day in that little school-room, with that set of tiresome children, and I envied his sisters when I saw them going out to parties so elegantly dressed, and knew they had just whatever they liked best. There was nobody to warn me; nobody who knew what he said to me, or how he lured me on to ruin, and made me believe in him more than in Heaven, and so I fell, and he died before he could make me a reparation; for had he lived, I do believe he would have saved me from disgrace. He said he loved me; I hope, I believe he did. Tell Maude so: tell her not to hate me for Annie's sake. Annie was not to blame—darling Annie!"

She was very much exhausted with all she had heard and said, and John tried to quiet her, and bade her rest and not talk any more then; but she was not yet through with all she had to say.

"Let me tell you while I can," she whispered; "tell you what I want you to do. He told me of a Janet over in Scotland waiting for him, and a little blind boy whose sight he hoped to have restored now he had the means. Find them, John; they live in —, not far over the border. When you and Maude are married go there on your bridal trip. I have money of my own—two thousand pounds, which Aunt Burton gave me. It is all in bonds. I shall give it to you, and a part of it you must give to her—to Janet and her little ones. That is something I can do, and it will make me die more easily knowing somebody will be benefited by me. Promise, John, to find her, or send the money to her in some way, but never let her know she was not his wife. Tell her his friends sent you."

She could not talk longer then, for her speech was failing her and her utterance so thick that it was with difficulty John could understand her. He made it out, however, and promising compliance with all she asked, soothed, caressed, and quieted her until she fell into a sleep which lasted several hours, and from which she awoke with a fresher, better look upon her face and in her eyes. But this did not deceive her, nor delude her with vain hopes. She knew that life was not for her, neither did she desire it now. Hoping and believing, though tremblingly, that all would be well with her hereafter, she looked forward calmly, even longingly, to the death which was to free her from all the bitter pangs of remorse which, should she live, would be hers to endure continually. The sight of Roy and her aunt was a constant pain and reproach to her, for she knew how unworthy she was of the fond love manifested for her by the one, and the extreme kindness and delicate attentions of the other.

"If I could tell them, if I dared confess; but I cannot, I cannot, and John says I need not," she thought often to herself, praying earnestly to be guided aright, and not to be allowed to leave undone anything necessary to her own salvation.

Once when Roy was sitting by her and holding in

his her white, wasted hand, she said to him, hesitatingly:

"Roy, you are a good man, one in whom I have confidence; tell me, please, if a person has done something wrong, very wrong, ought he to confess it to everybody or anybody, unless by so doing he could do some good, or repair an injury?"

Roy did not think it necessary, he said, though he was not quite sure that he fully understood the case. There were great drops on Georgie's face, and her lips twitched convulsively, as she said:

"Roy, there was something in my early life which I meant to keep from you, which I want to keep from you now. It would distress me greatly to tell it. Do you think I must—that is, will Heaven love me more if I tell?"

Instantly there came back to Roy a remembrance of Georgie's strange conduct at the time of their engagement, and he felt certain that whatever it was now preying on her mind was then troubling on her lips. What it was he did not care to know; it could not affect him now. Georgie was passing away from him to another and he believed better world. He had never loved her as he knew in his heart he was capable of loving the young girl whose voice he heard just then in the yard below; but during the days he watched beside her and saw how changed she was, how gentle and patient she grew, and how earnestly she was striving to find the narrow way, even at the eleventh hour, he felt that he liked her as he had never done before, liked her so well that he did not care to hear anything which could lower her in his opinion, and so he said to her:

"Georgie, I fancied that something was troubling you, but do not distress yourself for me. If the something in your past life does not now affect any one, keep it to yourself. I do not wish to know it. Neither, I am sure, would Mrs. Burton if the telling it would trouble you. Be satisfied with my decision, and let us remember you as you seemed to us."

He bent down and kissed her softly, while the tears raised over her face, and her pale lips whispered:

"Bless you, Roy, bless you for the comfort you have given me. Think of me always as kindly as you can, but as one who had erred and sinned and hoped she was forgiven, and who loved you, Roy, oh so much, for I do, I do, better than you love me. I have known that all along, known that I was not to you what you are to me, and in time you will find another to take my place; find her soon, perhaps, and if you do, don't wait till I have been dead the prescribed length of time, but marry her at once, and bring her to your mother, if she is not already there."

Georgie said the last slowly, and, looking into Roy's eyes, saw that he understood her, and went on:

"She is a sweet girl, Roy; pure and womanly. Your mother loves her as a daughter, and I give her my right in you. If you succeed, don't forget, please, what I say; if you succeed, remember that I told you I knew all about her. Don't forget."

A violent fit of coughing came on, and in his anxiety and fear Roy paid but little heed to what Georgie had said with regard to Miss Overton, who soon came into the room and signified her readiness to do whatever she could for the suffering Georgie.

The August morning was a glorious one, and every shrub and flower and glat of grass at Oakwood seemed fairly to laugh as, glistening with the rain drops which had fallen through the night, they lifted their heads to the beautiful summer sunlight which came up the eastern hills and bathed the earth in a sea of mellow light. The air, purified by the thunder shower, was cool and sweet, and laden with the perfume of the many flowers which dotted the handsome lawn, while the birds seemed almost bursting their little throats with gladness as they sang amid the trees and flew about the house from whose door-knobs knots of grape were streaming, and whose shutters were closed as if to shut out the glorious day which seemed only to mock the sorrow of those who wept that morning for their loved and lost one. Georgie was dead! Just as the lightning flash and the thunder roll passed away and the young moon broke through the rift of dark storm clouds, she looked her last good-bye to those around her, and her spirit fled to Him who would deal justly with her and of whom she had no fears as she went down the river bank and launched out into the stream whose waters never return to lave the shores of time.

It was a very easy death she died, so easy that John, who held her in his arms, only knew the moment of her departure by the sudden pressure of her hand on his and the falling of her head upon his bosom. He had said good-bye to every one, and left for all a friendly word, and tried, as far as possible, to repair any wrong she might have done. To Edna, who was often with her, she had said once, when they were alone:

"I have something to say to you. I knew you from

the first, and but for Maude and John, should have told Roy who you were. I disliked your being there, and meant to do you harm. I purposely worried and annoyed you by talking so much of Charlie's wife, and I exaggerated matters when I told of Mrs. Churchill's feelings towards her daughter-in-law, and what Roy said about her coming in disguise. You remember it, I think. I wanted to make sure that you would neither remain at Leighton nor divulge your real name to them. Forgive me, Edna, won't you? I have much need of your forgiveness."

Edna had stooped and given her the kiss of pardon, feeling, as she did so, that a load was lifted from her heart, and that she could now more easily make herself known to Charlie's friends.

"Do it at once," George said. "Don't put it off, but let Roy know who you are."

Edna promised that she would do so; then, with another kiss for the repentant woman, she went back to Leighton, and when next she looked on George she was cold and pale in death, but lay like one asleep upon her pillow, with the white lilies in her hand and a look of perfect peace upon her face. The pinched, disturbed look was gone, and in its stead death gave back to her much of her glorious beauty. The bright colour had faded from her cheeks; there were threads of snow in her black hair, and her glorious eyes were closed for ever; but otherwise she looked the same, and poor Mrs. Burton wrung her hands distractedly as she bent over her beautiful darling, and called upon her to waken and speak to the mother who loved her so much. They dressed her in her wedding robes, and Roy kissed his pale, dead bride with a great sob of pain, and forgot for once when Brownie's step came near, and did not hear when she spoke to him. It was a grand funeral—the largest ever known in Somerville, for the circumstances attending George's death had been so strange and sad that hundreds had gathered from a distance, and came to show their respect for the mourning family. They laid her by the side of Annie.

(To be continued.)

FACETIÆ.

AN OUTRAGE ON HUMANITY.—A ruthless wretch has just insisted on seeing us, in order to perpetrate this savage assault on the English language. He says a man who glances at—*can* (*sakance*) must be possessed of can-eyeball (*sannibal*) propensities. —*Punch*.

THE LAW'S A LOTTERY!

People had better be shy of Lambeth Police-court. Why? Just read this: "Mr. Chance, the newly-appointed magistrate for Lambeth, took his seat for the first time on Monday." It is evident that all cases henceforth will be decided by Chance!

THEO. TARD.—The Oxford Political Economy Professor is about to give a course of lectures on "Money." This is complimentary to Lord Lytton, but, considering events, lectures on the "Lady of Lyons" would be more interesting. Oxford is still a little behind the time. —*Punch*.

SINCERITY.

Grace: "I am going to see Clara to-day. Have you any message?"

Charlotte: "I wonder how you can visit that dreadful girl. Give her my love." —*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

TOO GREAT LUXURY.—Mrs. Malaprop, who has heard much lately of the fall of the present Dinnersty in France, says she is not in the least surprised, for she always procrastinated that all the Epicurious goings on in Paris would end in a catastrophe. Could she mean cataclysm? —*Punch*.

A PROPER PENDANT.—One of the papers read before the British Association at Liverpool dealt with "the Earth's Eccentricity." At the next Social Science Congress a communication will be made respecting "the Earth's Inhabitants' Eccentricity." —*Punch*.

MUSICAL MISCONCEPTION.

Selina (on a visit to her cousin): "By-the-by, Clara dear, do you know 'The Moon is Brightly Shining'?"

Clara: "I am delighted to hear it; I shall continue practising no longer. Would you believe it, darling, when I sat down to the piano the rain was coming down in torrents; what a delightful change. (Rising.) I can now keep my appointment with Charley, so I wish you good night, and thank you for the information." (Exit Clara.) —*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

AN ALARMING PARAGRAPH.—A DEAD SHOT.—We read in an evening newspaper on Monday night a statement to the effect that "the Prince of Wales will visit Lord and Lady Walsingham at Merton Hall, near Theford, on the 21st November, and will shoot for several days through Lord Walsing-

ham—" The remainder of the line was, however, so blotted with printers' ink as to be perfectly illegible. Being utterly unable to make out any valid reason why such cruel sport as that of shooting through noblemen should be exclusively enjoyed by a Prince of the blood royal, we purchased a second copy of the same paper, and had the pleasure to find our fears groundless. The paragraph finished with the words, "through Lord Walsingham's well-stocked preserves." —*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

"L'EAU!" (MILKMAN'S CRY.)

We read in the *Christian World* (all honour to it for its successful exertions to erect a monument to the author of the "History of Moll Flanders") that there is wanted a—

GENERAL SERVANT, immediately, in a small family, where two cows are kept. One of good character. A Baptist preferred. —Apply B. C. & Co.

An applicant will do wisely to stipulate that she shall milk only the cow of good character. But why a Baptist? Does the advertiser vend milk? In that case he should be aware that there is such a thing as a lactometer. Still, B. C. may mean only a Baptist cowkeeper, who may desire a servant of his own faith. In that case we may remark that a presumably religious person has no business to keep one cow of other than good character. —*Punch*.

THE WOODLAND PATH.

Once more I tread the pathway sweet,

That, in my boyhood's day,

Off led my wild and wayward feet

To ramble far away.

The mighty elms still overbower

Its soft and winding thread,

And clasping vines of trumpet-flower

Nod lightly overhead.

It picks its way from stone to stone

Across the merry brook,

And then winds on through covert's loose,

And many a leafy nook;

Through mossy mounds and ferny deeps,

It softly skirts the hill,

Curves down again, and gently creeps

By Farmer Felton's mill.

But now, while roars the autumn blast,

Whirling the leaves in wrath,

Sad memories come trooping fast

Along the woodland path.

My rustling feet seem not alone;

Again almost I hear

The gentle step beside my own

Which made my boyhood dear.

The touching of a hand long cold,

The music of a voice

That thrilled me in the days of old,

And made my heart rejoice,

Again are near me, shadow-like,

Beneath the swinging boughs;

But only the whirling dead leaves strike

Upon my aching brows.

Oh, other hearts as free from home,

And other feet as free,

May now along the pathway roam,

And in these woodlands be;

But no lonelier step than mine can stir

The dead leaves downward east,

With my thoughts among the things that were,

The phantoms of the Past! N. D. U.

GEMS.

POLITENESS is the just medium between ceremony and rudeness.

Those who praise you in the beginning will ask favours in the end.

An honest employment is the best inheritance that can fall to any one.

GENIUS has limits, virtue has none; every one pure and good can become purer and better still.

MANKIND has been learning for six thousand years, and yet how few have learned that their fellow beings are as good as themselves.

THE more a man knows the less he is apt to talk; discretion always his heat, and makes him coolly deliberate what and where to speak.

THE worst-hated people are most injured by slanders; as we usually find that to be the best fruit which the birds have been pecking at.

STATISTICS.

THE revenue returns from the 1st of April to the 22nd of October show the following results:—Receipts, 38,689,156*l.*; last year, 37,569,023*l.* Expenditure, 39,585,532*l.*; last year, 41,197,700*l.* Balances, 1,523,667*l.*; last year, 1,046,931*l.*

FORTIFICATIONS.—The expenses of fortifications to 1st April last are given as follows in a Parlia-

mentary return recently issued:—At Portsmouth, 2,209,470*l.* 16*s.*; Plymouth, 1,416,957*l.* 13*s.*; Pembroke, 285,772*l.* 3*s.* 2*d.*; Portland, 336,146*l.* 19*s.* 1*d.*; Gravesend, 186,423*l.* 0*s.* 7*d.*; Chatham, 252,115*l.* 11*s.* 10*d.*; Sheerness, 301,173*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*; Dover, 284,334*l.* 18*s.* 3*d.*; Cork, 89,462*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*; providing and fixing iron shields, 7,806*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.* Incidental expenses; works, 161,643*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*; experiments, 14,670*l.* 2*s.*; surveys, 30,813*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.*; clearance works, 46,666*l.* 14*s.* 5*d.*; legal and other incidental expenses, 32,180*l.* 10*s.* 5*d.*; total, 5,655,643*l.* 12*s.* 1*d.*

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TEA FOR THE MILLION.—A correspondent thus writes:—"Many of your subscribers may be glad to know that the raspberry-leaf—I mean the second leaf (that now on the branches)—makes the finest tea I ever tasted. The spring leaves are too strong. I have used this tea myself for twelve months at a time without any fault being found with it. The leaves, when dry, should be infused just in the same manner as ordinary leaves. The garden raspberry will do; but I prefer the wild variety, which is very plentiful in the woods and dingles of England."

ISINGLASS.—Russian isinglass dissolves very rapidly in hot water, seldom leaving over 2 per cent. of insoluble residue; it is pleasant to the taste, and yields a firm and transparent gelatine. Bengal or Indian isinglass dissolves readily, but leaves a much larger proportion of residue—from 7 to 13 per cent.; it often has a fishy taste, and its gelatine is not clear. The gelatine obtained from Brazilian isinglass is opaque and acrid. The isinglass prepared in China is seldom exported.

A CURE FOR SOMNAMBULISM.—Two instances of somnambulism being perfectly cured by means of bromide of potassium are recorded in the *Paris Les Mondes*. A woman twenty-four years old, who had attacks two or three times a week for ten years, after taking two grammes of bromide of potassium in 75 of water daily, the dose being gradually increased to six grammes, was entirely cured at the end of two months. The other case, a girl of eight years, after taking one gramme morning and evening for a short time, was completely restored to health.

MISCELLANEOUS.

UPWARDS of 500 families in Lisburn are suffering from the effects of the floods.

MISS GARRETT, M.D., is a candidate for a seat at the Metropolitan School Board for the Marylebone division.

THE Queen has contributed 100*l.* to the "Captain" Relief Fund, Princess Louise and Prince Arthur 20*l.* each, Prince Leopold 15*l.*, and the Prince of Wales, 50*l.*

CAPTAIN MORLEY, R.N., who was present at the battle of Trafalgar, and served for a considerable time under Lord Nelson, has just died. He entered the navy in 1801.

THE marriage of the Princess Louise with the Marquis of Lorne will not take place until about the end of February. We learn that Her Royal Highness has met with an accident—a sprain of the knee—at Balmoral.

THE death is announced of Captain Frederick Chamier, R.N., whose sea novels about twenty-five years ago attained a considerable degree of popularity. He was born in 1796, entered the navy in 1809, and served in the American war of 1812.

THE story that Messrs. Baring Brothers had made investments on account of the Emperor of the French is flatly denied by that firm, who add that they do not hold any stocks or objects of value on his account.

Two elderly men named Rogers and Minnett are in custody in London on the charge of obtaining money by pretending to be collectors on behalf of an imaginary association for the reduction of the income-tax.

ON the 15th or 16th of December, after paying the accustomed annual visit to the tomb of the late Prince Consort at Frogmore, Her Majesty will leave Windsor for Osborne, where the Queen will spend Christmas.

THE COUNTESS OF DERWENTWATER.—This lady has visited Consett, in company with two gentlemen. Her "ladyship" paid a visit to Mrs. Brown, wife of the incarcerated bailiff, and also to Mrs. George, the lady with whom she lodged for a short time when resident in Consett. Her "ladyship" was visited by two of her faithful adherents, but nothing has transpired on which any reliance can be placed. Gossips have it that her "ladyship" has had a long interview with the son of Mr. Bruce who gave her 1,500*l.* and the promise of the estates in a month. Of course this will pass as current coin for a few days till the electro-plate wears off.

The Dream of Victory.

Poetry by M. PERROTT.

The Music by GUILATI.

Slow, with expression.

VOICE. *Moderato.* *lento.* *largo.*

PIANO. *pf* *dim.* *ped.* *pp* *pp*

The War - rior 'woke from the
In a dream the War - ri - or

con express.

long deep sleep, That pre - cedes the gloom of death..... And he look'd a - round for some
thought he saw— And it came from his na - tive land..... A love - ly form, and she

lento. *Affetto.*

friend - ly ear, To re - ceive his part - ing breath..... He look'd a - round, But no
wreath'd his brow, With the chaplet that graced her hand;..... "The bat - tle," she whis - per'd, "is

dolce.

friend was there, O'er all the em - bat - tled plain..... The War - rior felt his
no - bly won; The strife and the con - flict are o'er..... The War - rior raised one

ad lib

eyes grow dim, And he turn'd to sleep a - gain....
trem' - lous shout! But he woke from that dream no more....

colla voce..... pp *poco* *cras.* *largo.* *ped.* *corni. ppp*

In a dream the Warrior thought he saw—
And it came from his native land—
A lovely form, and she wreath'd his brow
With the chaplet that graced her hand;

"The battle," she whisper'd, "is gallantly won,
The strife and the conflict are o'er."
The Warrior raised one trem'lous shout!
But he woke from that dream no more.

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